

I-WONDER-WHY STORIES

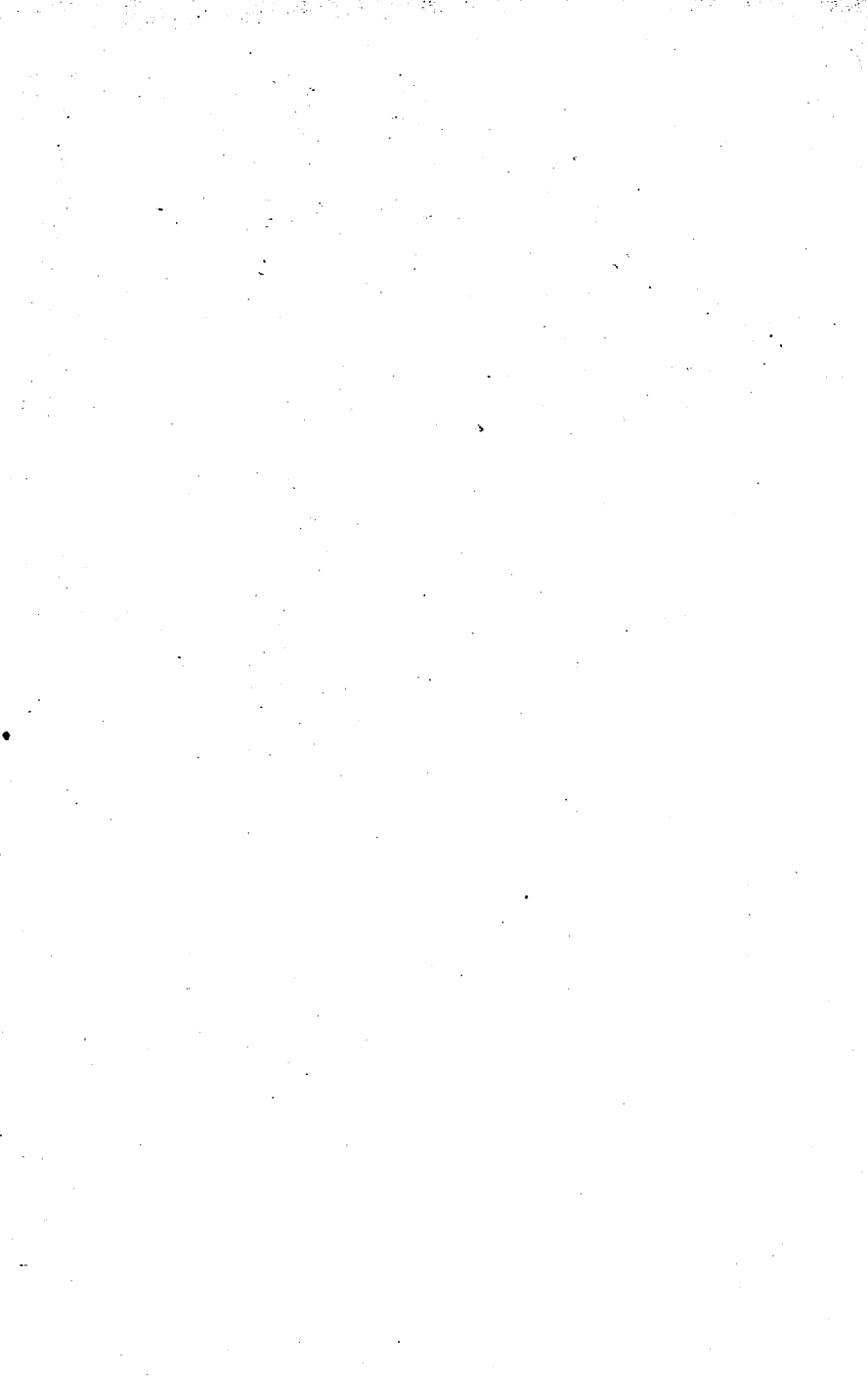
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I-WONDER-WHY STORIES

GEORGE ADAM

AND

MAX. HENKEY



I-WONDER-WHY STORIES

TOLD BY
GEORGE ADAM

EDITED AND COMPILED BY
MAX. HENKEY

NEW  YORK

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

WINDY
TO
SIBIRIAN! OOHOOH

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PREFACE

The little talks contained in this book were delivered in Emmanuel Church, Montreal, to the children attending the morning service. They were also accepted by the older people of the congregation in many instances as a basis of talk for the children at home. This latter use seems to me to be their only claim to consideration, so when Mr. Henkey approached me for permission to publish his notes I agreed. Naturally enough, short talks of this kind, taken down at the time, have many faults in construction and style. Mr. Henkey has made as good use as possible of such material as was provided. There is no gainsaying the fact that the moral and spiritual welfare of the child has not the special place in the average home it ought to be given. It may be, therefore, that a few fresh ideas which will serve for this ministry in home and Sunday School shall be found in the pages of this little book. At all events, this is my earnest hope and if its usefulness can at all be measured by the pleasure given me in their original deliverance, this compilation cannot have been made in vain.

GEORGE ADAM.

Emmanuel Church,
Montreal, Canada.

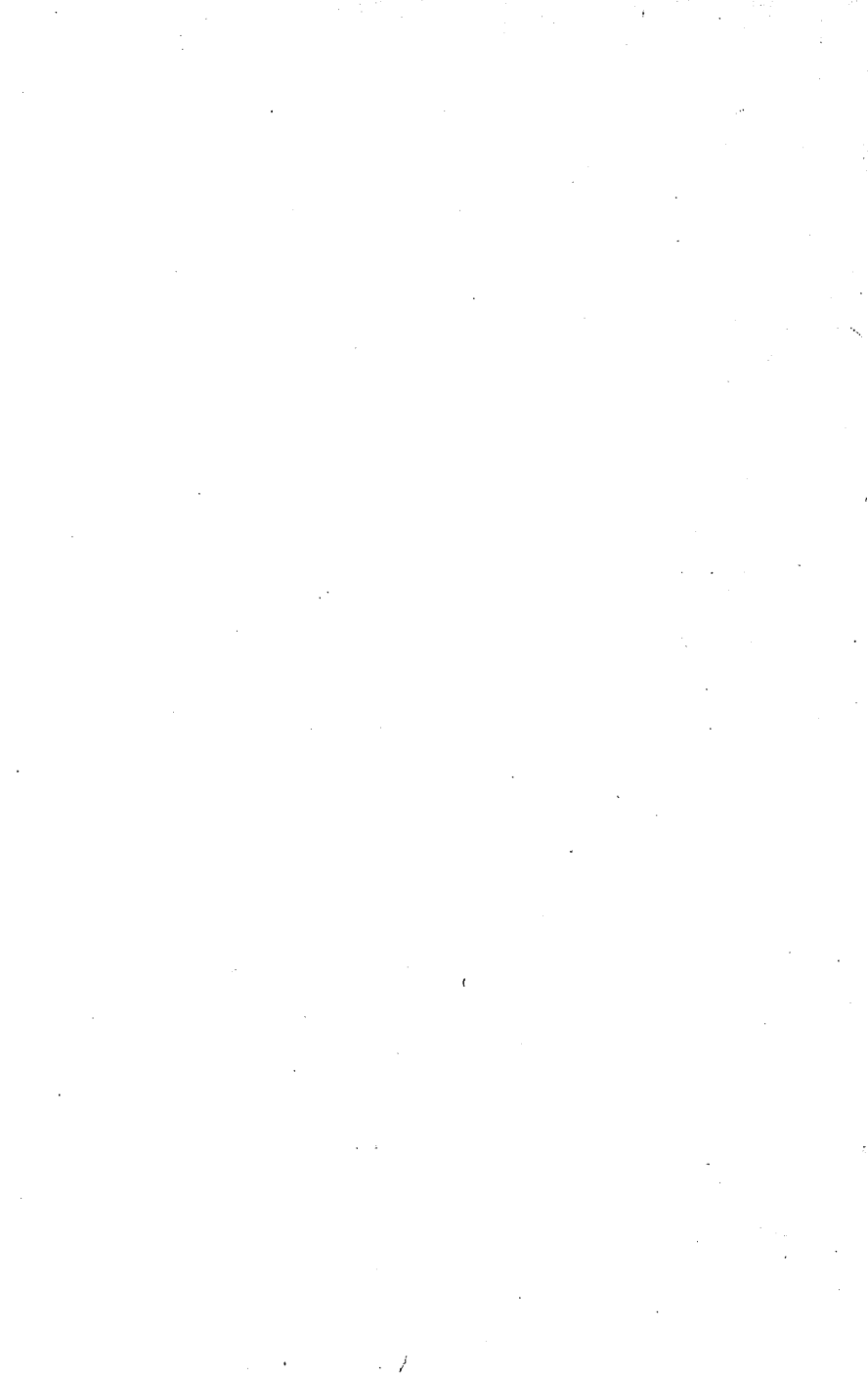


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I-WONDER-WHY STORIES



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WIRELESS MESSAGES

S O. S." That is the wireless telegraphic code signal of a ship in distress summoning assistance.

If the ship on which you are sailing is disabled in mid-ocean and there is no other ship in sight, how else can you ask for help than by wireless telegraph? None. Of course, if other vessels are within seeing distance the Captain orders that flags signalling distress be hoisted up to the top mast. At night rockets are sent up to attract any passing ship. But if there are no other ships in sight at all you would be lost if your Captain did not use his wireless telegraph apparatus to call out that he needs assistance.

There was an old Captain not long ago who did not believe in the wireless telegraph system.

"It's all bosh," he said, "how can you speak without wires? I know the telephone is all right, because the other end of the wire connects with the person I talk with. The ordinary telegraph which has wires running on poles from one city to another, or under the ocean from one continent to another, is also quite understandable. I believe in it because I can see the connecting wires.

But you can't tell me you can make a few flashes from that pole, from which there are no wires running away to another ship, and that your message will reach where you want it to go."

Needless to say, this was not an up-to-date Captain. He had sailed a trading vessel to the South Seas and had not come to a modern port since this discovery was made.

One day he was travelling on a big new ocean liner. But he travelled only as a passenger, not as a Captain, for he was too stubborn to believe anything he could not see. Unbelievers cannot rise to command important things, so when his trading ship was given over to a new Captain who understood the value of wireless telegraphy, he was not able to get another ship to command. So he was on his way home to spend the rest of his life away off where people were old fashioned.

After the ship was some days out at sea, the boiler exploded and did a lot of damage to the ship.

"You see," said the old Captain to the new one, "this could never happen on my sailing ship. If the mast broke we could always rig up a temporary one. But where are you to get a new boiler in the middle of the ocean? And you have no sails to hoist to your masts."

But the new Captain knew better. He knew what to do in times of trouble and distress on the high seas.

"Truly, this is a sad accident," he replied; "but the ship is of iron and withstood the force of the explosion. Our hull is not damaged. Had it been

your ship it would have been blown to pieces."

"Now is the time to test your belief in being able to send messages through space without them wires," challenged the old Captain to the new one.

"Very well then, come below to the operator's cabin."

There the incredulous old Captain saw the operator of the wireless telegraph with an instrument over his ears, ticking a key which sent out blue sparks every time he touched it. He was sending out the "S. O. S." message calling for assistance. Would the message be heard? Would it reach a ship many miles away that no one could see?

Of course it was heard. In a very few moments the comforting assurance came through the miles of intervening space that help was coming. The operator reported the answer to the Captain, but even then the old Captain, standing close by, did not credit the possibility, and kept muttering "I know it is not possible."

But the ship did arrive, and very soon too. When the disabled vessel was being towed to shore the old Captain boarded the other ship. He found the other operator, and there, true enough, was the message written out, and the exact time was indicated when the message was received. It was only a few seconds later than it had been sent.

Sometimes boys and girls find it difficult to understand about how we send messages to God. They do not understand how God will hear and answer, if they send a message from their hearts off into the air by saying a prayer in their bed-

room. Of course prayer is mysterious, but it is not the only mystery that we are called upon to believe.

Every day out on the great oceans men are sending wireless messages off into the great unknown, into illimitable space. It looks as if they would never get anywhere, but they do. They are even delivered into the hands of those to whom they are addressed. I can tell you this is true from my own experience. Once when I was sailing on one of the Holland-American liners to New York, a man went calling my name along the deck. I beckoned to him, and he handed me a yellow envelope. In it I found a message from a friend who was sailing towards Great Britain. There, out in the wide ocean, I got my message.

Now, if men can send messages thousands of miles through the air to other men, surely it is not asking too much of you in the way of belief and confidence, to urge you to send a message to the Great God and expect an answer. Try it. Send a wireless to-night.

SUBMARINE CHASERS

THE last two years of the war were not happy days for the under-water boats—U-boats. Of course, you know the proper name for them is Submarine. These U-boats belonging to the enemy prowled the ocean and sank harmless merchant ships carrying food and people. In 1915 and 1916 submarines were a great menace to all ocean-travelling ships, and they mercilessly pursued our merchantmen and sank them with the cargoes and men, women and children on board. Of course, most of our ships then were unarmed and without convoy. Think of what a dreadful thing it was to have these monsters suddenly appear in front of a harmless liner, shoot a torpedo into it, and then disappear under the water again.

But the Allies changed all this. In 1918 the U-boats were being actually pursued and destroyed even when seeking the seclusion of the ocean depths. We are told that the U-boats were being destroyed as fast as they were constructed. Every day large numbers of destroyers and submarine chasers were hunting U-boats.

Many startling captures have come to my notice. Once a seaplane had "spotted" a submarine lying on the sea bed. Instantly the observer's finger tapped a key. Ten miles away a long, lean destroyer and four squatty trawlers detached

themselves from a squadron and hastened to the summons. Meanwhile the seaplane circled around. When the surface ships arrived, curt but precise instructions were delivered by wireless. Then the four trawlers stationed themselves in such a way as to form a square. The destroyer kept her guns ready pointing to the enemy should he appear above the surface. The trawlers forming the four corners got out their sweepers. These are long wire hawsers of an incredible stoutness. A heavy "kite" is attached in the centre to keep these hawsers down on the sea bed. All together, the four trawlers steamed toward each other. As the pairs of vessels met, their wires engaged themselves under the submarine's bow and stern and commenced to work their sinuous ways between her hull and the sea bottom. Now the trawlers crossed their dependent cables and thus held the U-boat in a kind of cat's cradle. She tried to disengage herself with a bound, but the meshes held her firm.

"Got him," signalled the seaplane.

"Thanks," replied the destroyer.

Five minutes was allowed for the submarine to come to the surface and surrender. But when it did not give itself up two signals were given, and immediately there followed a rumbling, muffled explosion which told of the U-boat's destruction.

You have heard of the White Cliffs of Dover, the sight of which cheers those Englishmen who, returning from a foreign clime, see, away in the distance, above the green water, those chalk cliffs boldly facing the waves.

One bright summer's day I was standing up on these cliffs watching torpedo control boats parading up and down the English Channel. Suddenly there was a movement among these boats, and some trawlers, that were leisurely steaming farther out from shore, also began to draw together. A naval officer, who was with me, said:

"Something is happening."

There was half an hour's exciting chase, but what they were chasing was not visible. Suddenly something dark and whale-like appeared on the surface of the water. It was a captured submarine. It had been trawled and caught, and then towed into port.

Everything was mysterious to me as to how this was done, so I asked for information. This was what I was told:

"On board the patrol boats which are seeking lurking submarines there is a sensitive electric instrument which records the proximity of an undersea craft. This apparatus is called a Hydrophone, which can perform wonders that were never before thought possible. Although those on the patrol boats cannot see the enemy by means of this instrument, they can locate them and tell just where they are.

"This makes the destruction of the enemy much easier than it would otherwise be. Quite a number of submarines have been captured in this way, and no doubt many good ships and many more valuable lives have been saved."

When I left the place from which I witnessed the capture, it occurred to me that there is something

very much like this Hydrophone—this sensitive instrument—in us. Every boy or girl has within himself or herself a recording instrument which tells of the presence of the enemy. No matter how invisible the enemy may be, we have an unfailing recorder which notifies and warns us of approaching evil. It is called conscience.

Temptation is the approach of the often invisible enemy. Our conscience tells us when temptation approaches us, and in what direction it is coming. Though you are young in years, you know very well that many a good ship has been lost on the sea of life by the torpedoes of temptation.

If you will read carefully and continuously the indications of your conscience, you will be warned of coming evil. You will then be able to destroy its power upon your life as those men destroyed the power of those submarines.

FLOATING MINES

BEWARE of the mines," said the Captain as the ship neared a curious-looking object in the sea.

"That's a submarine, not a mine. Let's go straight for the hidden boat and ram it," urged the pilot.

"No, no, no. I say that's a floating mine, and the most dangerous there is. Keep away from it or we are doomed," wisely cautioned the Captain.

The pilot obeyed. The ship was saved.

"But that was a periscope, the periscope of a submarine, was it not?" inquired the puzzled pilot.

"Things these days are not what they appear," explained the Captain when the floating danger was passed. "Ramming U-boats was considered a most efficient method of sending enemy submarines to the bottom. But, knowing too well the ramming tactics of the Allied sailors, it did not take the enemy long to turn this form of attack to advantage; this he did by introducing the periscope mine."

"So that was a periscope mine?" interrupted the pilot. "Tell me more about it."

"Yes, it was," continued the Captain. "These mines that have one or two periscope-like projections sticking out of the water are the latest destructive device. It is a fiendish decoy. It floats

about the sea with only its periscope-like things showing above the water. Every one must be wide awake to its dangers, for many a vessel may be tempted to ram it in the belief that the periscope belongs to a submarine. That mine contains several hundred pounds of high explosive, and any ship touching it would be blown to atoms."

There are many other mines that float about the ocean, and the Captain told of many narrow escapes from some that were almost invisible. But there are a great many more invisible or deceptive mines that do equally as much damage but do not float on water. Words have a great influence and play a great part in the world. Sometimes we hear a kind word spoken that floated about in the world for a great many years. When it was suddenly remembered it struck into the mind of a person and brought comfort and courage. On the other hand, hasty, cruel words are sometimes spoken in the hearing of those about us, words which seem to do very little harm when they are cast adrift on the ocean of life. A day comes, however, in this turbulent sea in which we dwell, when these words strike a human ship. Then they become harmful and do a great deal of damage. They strike the people who have remembered them, and very often the harm rebounds on the people who set the mines—who uttered the words.

It is said: "Kind words never die." But the opposite is also true, and Shakespeare said: "The evil men do lives after them."

Mines set in this way do not seem to us to be very troublesome, because often after having

spoken rashly and harshly we are removed from the scenes of our speech. The circumstances are forgotten. But there lies the danger. Just like the mines strewn upon the ocean during the days of great wars, they go somewhere and will be a great danger for many years after.

Mines are set adrift in times of anger, and neutral and innocent ships are torn and despoiled. Unoffending and harmless people are killed or injured and other people's property lost.

Children, carelessness in conversation is to be avoided; frequently evil that we are not able to avoid comes of it. Words may give great distress. They blow up and wreck a life and send it to the bottom like the ships.

And it is the Lord Jesus who speaks now:

"Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment, for by thy words thou shalt be justified and by their words they shall be condemned."

UP IN AN AIRSHIP

A FEW years ago I was walking along a sandy seashore in England when I heard a most extraordinary noise overhead. Never before had I heard such a noise. At first I imagined it must be a giant bee buzzing, for I had read in story-books that there were all sorts of giant animals at one time. I looked up, but the sun blinded me. For some minutes I was in suspense as to what the unearthly thing could possibly be.

Presently a great bird, weighing almost two tons, with wide out-spread wings, curved gracefully downward. It landed on the smooth, hard sand about 200 yards from where I stood.

"How fortunate I am," I thought to myself as I realised what I was looking at. "It is an aeroplane, a real airship."

Quivering with excitement at the strange experience, I ran to see the machine in which a man could actually fly through the air like a bird. At that time the airplane was a very unusual sight. As I approached the machine a man jumped out. I was the only one about, and I must have shown my interest, for I was always keen to learn about anything new.

I soon found out, after greeting the man in that

kindly fashion boys know of when they think a favour is coming, that he was the famous Anglo-American airman, Colonel Cody, and was flying all around the coast of the British Isles. Also I found out that he was a brother of "Buffalo Bill," the hero of many tales of great interest to boys.

I began to ply very many questions, as every boy would. Some of the replies I got were most interesting. He showed me all over the machine, and explained how the wooden blades of the propeller had to be of a strong, light wood, carefully made and put together so as to give the highest efficiency at various speeds of flight. Also the framework, which looked so frail, had to be of light but very strong wood. There were fine wires running criss-cross to strengthen and support the planes. The tail had pieces that looked as if they could flap, and a steering rudder like a boat. It was a fine machine in every detail of its intricate parts.

Then we mounted the machine, and I sat beside him as he showed me the engine,—how powerful and even-running it had to be. Then he explained some of the many dangers that lurked about when you fly, any one of which if not properly understood and quickly counteracted when met would mean instant destruction. He told me of pockets in the air, of which airmen had to be so careful. He told me how the country looked when you were above it; how cold it was away up among the clouds. Oh, many things he told me. But most significant of all was this:

"To keep up," he said, "one must keep going. To stop going is to come down."

This also is true in your life and my life, boys and girls. To keep busy is to go up, and to keep up. To be idle is to come down, and to stay down. Our mothers' and our fathers' deepest wish for us all is that we should go up, and keep up. That we should be good and keep good. To do this we must keep going.

Now you see why this remark of Colonel Cody was significant. Children, what he said was true, and you will be sorry to hear how true. One day when this airman was up in the air ever so high, something went wrong with the engine. It stopped suddenly. The machine went down. It hit the ground with a crash, and was destroyed. Broken to bits. So, sad to say, this brave airman died.

To stop being busy is to destroy the capacity that enables you to work, and when that is done, disaster stares you in the face. Keep busy, girls and boys. Busy at the things that are good and true, and you will soar on wings high above the clouds, until you reach the gates of Heaven itself. Remember, the Bible tells us that: "If we endure to the end we shall get the Crown." And another book tells us: "Mischief always waits for idle hands."

Keep busy.

CROSSING THE OCEAN

CRossing the ocean was more dangerous in the olden times than now. Of course, during the Great War it was even more risky to sail from one continent to the other than in the olden times. But that danger was of man's making, for our enemies were using submarines, torpedoes, mines and all sorts of destructive inventions to blow up our great and beautiful ships. Yet these dangers were overcome to a large extent by the wonderful things the Allied Nations did to preserve the lives of all those people whom duty called to cross the ocean.

I wonder if you have ever seen the great Trans-Atlantic liners that were used to take your brothers and your fathers overseas to the Great War? I have travelled backwards and forwards on them half a dozen times in the past year or so. The last time I crossed I began to investigate the interior of the big vessel to find out for you, boys and girls, what was the most important thing on a ship.

Naturally enough I went to the Captain, for he is the head of the ship, and he is supposed to know everything about ships, and he does too. I said to him:

"Captain, what is the most important thing on

board your ship? I want to find out for my boys and girls, and I want to be sure I am right."

He replied: "I hardly know, there are so many things that are important. But what is *most* important is not very easy to say in such a complex thing as this vast vessel."

I asked the Captain then if he was considered the most important. He said, "No, I am not. There was a captain on this ship before I was and there will be one after me."

Then I made all sorts of guesses, and asked if it was the Compass.

He said, "No; unless the stars go out, we can navigate the ship by them."

I was growing impatient, and again I asked:

"What is the most important thing then, anyway? I want to know."

This time he said: "Ask the Chief Engineer."

So I went to see the Chief Engineer. On the way I thought to myself: "I know the most important thing. It is the Engine."

Quite hopeful and pleased at the happy thought I approached the Chief Engineer away down in the engine room. After greeting him I ventured to say:

"Sir, I am trying to find out what is the most important thing on your ship. I know it's not the Captain, nor the compass. I think it is the engine."

He said I was wrong. "You see," he explained, "if the engine goes out of commission and becomes disabled, we can hoist a sail, and make the shore that way."

"Then I must begin my enquiry all over again," I said, "if it's not any of these, will you please show me?"

"Follow me," he commanded, and I did. He took me down to a dark place, away down a lot of long steel ladders. When we reached what I thought must surely be the bottom of the sea instead of the bottom of the ship, we stopped. It was pitch dark. Switching on an electric light I found myself in front of a great, black thing.. It was a huge iron tank. Pointing to it the Engineer said:

"The most important thing on board the ship is contained in that tank."

I looked in, and I was never more surprised in my life. I wonder if you can guess what it was. O-I-L, oil, just oil.

"Without the oil, the coal, the water, the engines, the engineers, the stokers, the compass, all would be of no use," the Chief Engineer told me. "Without the oil the engines could not run, and the rudder would not work to steer the ship to shore. The voyage would not be a success, the ship could not be maintained. She would be open to all kinds of dangers."

This is true to life.

Oil is a smooth, a gentle thing, and gentleness is the most important thing in life. What is the highest type of man? A gentleman. What makes things go with smoothness? Why, gentleness.

The Lord says: "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

The great King David admitted this truth when

he said: "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

What is it about mother that makes her so attractive, that makes us love her so? Her gentleness. So you see, what oil is to the ship on the great rolling sea, gentleness is to each one of us on our voyage across the great Sea of Life.

THE FIRELESS ENGINE

HAVE you ever been on a great big railway engine? If not be sure the next time you go on a picnic, or take the train to go away off to visit your uncle or aunt, to make friends with the engineer. He can show you and tell you so many things about an engine that you could never know otherwise. Mostly engineers are very kindly men, and if he has time he will gladly help you up into the "cab," which is the little house in which he sits with the fireman and pulls all the different levers that make the engine go.

When I was a boy I liked trains very much. One kind old engineer actually took me for a short trip across a bridge and let me blow the whistle all the way there and back again. It's great fun blowing the whistle and making everybody look. Oh, but it's great to be an engineer,—at least I thought so when I was a boy. Just think that to move that great, ponderous locomotive, with a string of ever so many cars on behind, all you have to do is jerk a lever backwards, and off she goes.

Engines and trains and railroads did not always exist, you know. Ask your father or your grandfather; I am sure they remember when there were none at all. One had to walk. Or if you had enough money saved up you could hire a horse, or

if it was very far buy a place in a stage coach. Of course you know there were no motor cars, no bicycles, nor motor cycles, only horses, mules, and oxen to travel by. Little boys and girls then had to do a great deal more walking than children do now. Many of you take street cars if you live in a city. They were not known then.

So you can see, children, what a most useful thing an engine is. How quickly it can take you from home to see your friends that live far away, and bring you back again, no matter how far it is! What a lot we have to thank that man for who invented engines! His name is Stephenson, and when you want to know more about him I shall be glad to tell you. Since he built his little working models in the year 1829, many other men all over the world have improved on his work. Now there are engines that can run 60 miles an hour—one mile every minute of your watch—and a mile is a long distance. Try and see how far a mile is by taking a walk straight away from home.

Now, I am still very fond of engines, though I am no longer a boy. I like fast ones, the ones that can travel a mile a minute, or more. The faster they can go the better I like them. How such an engine can haul, and pull great, heavy carriages full of people long distances! How it pants when it stops at a station, as though it were almost, though not quite, out of breath! When the whistle blows, it is off again, bounding like a greyhound away across the country, carrying its load of men and women, and children too.

What a powerful thing it seems!

One day, not long ago, I went to a large locomotive works, where hundreds of men work night and day building these mile-a-minute engines. I visited the Chief Engineers of the plant, and I stood with them on the footplates of a brand new engine. It was called the "Flying Scotsman." It was a beautiful engine, painted green, with golden lines, and looked ever so fine. With the body varnished bright, and the rods, cranks, levers all agleam, it reminded me of the new toy engine Santa Claus brought me for Christmas when I was a good little boy.

"This is wonderful," I said to the Engineer.

"Maybe," he replied, "but you see"—pulling the lever—"it is powerless."

All those cylinders and tubes and pipes and wheels, all that strength and beauty, was powerless, useless, because the fire had not been kindled. That great engine could not run on the level by its own weight. The only thing it could do was to run down hill. It needed no fire, nor steam, for that. But to let that great, gleaming engine run down hill was to have it smash to pieces at the bottom. With the fires kindled and the steam up, all that it was made to do was possible. It could carry its load, climb the hills, chase along the levels, mile after mile, and day after day.

So it is with us. We may be wonderful machines, made up of flesh and blood, but without the fire—powerless. And useless too.

Light the fires of enthusiasm.

Remember the fireless engine which could not

make the grades on its journey except by the power of the fire within. So you cannot become men and women of great power and usefulness unless a Divine Fire is burning freely in your life. The Divine Fire is the Love of Jesus Christ. Let it glow and burn within you.

THE LIGHTED CANDLE

SIX candles slumbered snugly side by side stored away in a dark and dusty corner of a cupboard. No one remembered that they were there. It must have been years ago that the old house was lighted by candles. Since then oil lamps replaced candles, gas replaced oil lamps, electricity replaced gas; so you see the six old candles that were left over from the old days were quite right to complain of neglect.

At first they rather liked their quiet, dark, restful corner where no one would disturb them.

"You see," said the selfish candle, "we are safer here. We will not have to be burned. We can live by ourselves and not live in fear from day to day that some one will pick us up and light us."

"Not so," spoke up the vain spiral candle. "I want to get out where people can admire my nice dress. I was not made to be lit anyway, for I heard the shopman say when he sold me that I made a very pretty ornament. Every one would rather admire me without my giving them any light, I feel sure."

"Oh, you wax candles are so full of praise of your own qualities," said the poor old yellow, tallow taper. "But I'll tell you if I was out of this old hiding place I would be safer than you all from the danger of being burned."

"How so?" enquired the listening candles.

"Well, I was much taller than I am now. You see where my wick is charred? I was lit and put in a dark room one night. Oh, you should have seen how I lit up that room! But looking around I was so frightened, for I was placed at the edge of a basket. In it was a puppy chewing up a brother candle. I shuddered so that my light blew out, and the smoke that curled up from my wick made such a bad smell that a maid came, took me down, and threw me in this box. So I guess they had enough of me and will not light me up again."

So the old yellow, tallow taper, full of fear, gave another shudder, and tucked himself away under the protection of the others.

A dirty, chipped, bent and cracked candle was the next to speak. He was a lazy fellow and said:

"For my part I'm quite content to stay here. I don't want to shine, nor stand up all day and night in a tight little candle-stick. I'd be so tired I'd fall right over. This snug little box is good enough for me to lie down in. I can sleep all day long and not be disturbed."

Of all the candles the finest was a pretty red one, of beautiful design, but he was greedy and boastful:

"I want to enjoy the many good things that my ancestors did. My ancestors occupied the foremost socket of the magnificent candelabra right over the dining table in Windsor Castle when Queen Victoria was a girl. I know I am being pre-

served for some specially great celebration, for I feel it in my very wax that I was meant for the good things of life. Maybe I'll be put on a birthday cake, or in the centre of a table full of good things to eat. I don't want to go to a church, for there a candle has to be so still and look so solemn. No, I want to be where it's gay, even if I am burned at both ends. I want to enjoy life."

Last of all to speak, and he spoke very wisely, was an ordinary two-cent paraffin wax candle. He told of how, before he was made into a candle, he lay for centuries in the earth, mixed with pitch and oil, waiting until the refiners of paraffin—coal oil—took him and purified him until he was clear wax. They did not know whether to use him as a floor polish or a candle.

But the foreman of the wax factory said:

"That's good clear wax; it would be most useful as a candle, as it will give a bright, clear light."

So he was made into a candle, and was put in a shop to sell, with hundreds of his brothers.

"I was bought by a little boy on Christmas eve," explained the candle. "The boy wanted to make his younger sister happy by having me light up the tip of a Christmas tree. I was lit the next night, and the little girl was so pleased with the light. Two or three times I was lit up, and then I was put away. I hope I can be of further use, as I am still quite tall. Perhaps another opportunity will come soon."

A great tragedy happened one day. There were a lot of mice and rats in the old house, and they found the box of candles. Night after night they

returned. First they ate the tallow candle that tried to hide itself, because rats like tallow very much. Then they gnawed the selfish candle, and the vain spiral one, until only the wicks were left. The old, broken, lazy candle was easy to chew up, and the nice, red, greedy one had a miserable end, for it was so hard it suffered great pain as the mice and rats nibbled it at both ends.

But the brave, little, plain, two-cent paraffin wax candle remained, for you know rats and mice are much like yourself. They do not eat anything that tastes of coal-oil. So they left it.

One night the lights went out just as I was writing one of these little talks to you boys and girls. I was on a visit at the time in a country parish among the Cotswold Hills in England, and I was staying in the very house where the tragedy of these candles occurred in the dark cupboard. It was while I was thinking hard to find something new to tell you that the gas went out, and I was left in the dark. There was no electricity in the house, so I had to look for a candle, and I found the only one that the rats would not eat.

I lit it and set it on the writing table before me. This little disturbance had interfered with the trend of my thoughts and I found it difficult to resume. Then the candle flickered up, seeming to say:

“Look at me. Look at me.”

I looked, and do you know that all the difficulties I had had in trying to think cleared up all at once as I looked at the candle? I was thinking about “Sacrifice,” and there before my eyes was

one of the best illustrations I had ever come across. The Lighted Candle!

As I gazed at it, I found it a very pretty candle, of clear, pure wax, with a lovely, white, glossy figure. It would have been nice to have preserved its beauty, but then that would not be fulfilling its destiny. And children and candles and everything else are made for a purpose, and their only real use is in fulfilling their purpose. Before the candle could do its bit, it had to be lit. When it was lit it began to disappear. But in giving itself it gave light. Such a soft and beautiful light is the light of a candle!

You children are all very beautiful. Nevertheless you must not think more of that beauty than the reason for its being there. God has made you for a purpose, and that purpose is to make the world brighter and better.

“Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light,
Like a little candle burning in the night.”

So we must shine,—

“You in your small corner and I in mine.”

MOTOR CAR EXPLOSIONS

SURELY the boy or girl isn't born who does not long to fly along the highway in a motor car. Up the hills and down into the dales, away along between the hedge-rows, skimming underneath the trees, flashing through the villages, and tooting through the towns. My! Isn't it exciting?

So soft are the seats and cushions. You can loll away back in them. Unevenness in the road, holes, ruts, or rocks, have no terrors. The springs in the seats and under the body of the car make travelling a sensation of pleasurable movement. Nothing will jar us; life in an automobile is made so easy for us, the hard knocks cannot hurt us. Oh, it's so pleasant.

But stop! Listen.

Have you ever wondered, when you have been whirring along, with such smoothness, ease and grace, what is happening underneath in the engine? Hear that pur-r-r-ing noise there under the cover? What causes that, and what does really make the engine Pur-r-r and drive the car? Would you be surprised if I told you? It is a series of explosions.—*Explosions!*

Yes, explosions. You thought explosions were dreadful things, did you? So they are. You think of houses tumbling over, tall towers torn to pieces, everything being destroyed. You think of these

things, don't you, when you think of explosions?

Well, the explosions in the motor car are taking place right enough. This is how it happens. A spark, an electric spark, goes into the gas chamber of the engine and explodes the gas formed from the gasoline that flows in there from the tank. When the gas explodes the force caused by the explosion pushes out the piston which forms the bottom of the cylinder. That is where the power comes from to drive the car. The piston springs back into place only to be driven out by another explosion. This happens so rapidly that it just makes an even pur-r-r-ing noise, quite pleasant to listen to.

You see, properly regulated, explosions are not so bad a thing after all. It is when there are no explosions that a car is useless. Most cars are thrown away in the scrap heap because the mechanics cannot get the proper explosions to take place. Remember, it is repeated explosions, and only explosions, that can be the means of giving you those summer-day delights through the country roadways.

I know some people whose life is very much like the progress of a smooth, good-going car. It seems smooth and easy. Difficulties are quickly overcome, hardships skimmed over. There is a grace of bearing and movement that is exhilarating. How do they do it? This is how. Their power is based on a series of explosions too. When trouble and temptation and difficulty assail these people, they are met by the divine spark of moral strength. When these two elements meet

an explosion occurs. Moral character, which is the piston of a true man's life, drives out the evil and at the same time propels that man onward and upward in the journey of life.

You see how it works, children? Try it. Your life will go forward smoothly and straightly, over rock and rut, high and low, just like a motor car on a summer's day.

"Shun evil companions, bad language disdain,
Each victory will help you some other to gain."

IF THE SUN WENT OUT

IF there were no sun in the sky, what then? What kind of a world would this be? Stop and think of what a horrible place this world would be if you had not around you all the beautiful things the sun makes possible.

What is the earth? It is a tremendous ball of stone. Inside it is red hot, and some of it is like molten iron, a liquid, burning mass. That is what comes out when a volcano is in eruption, and it is called lava. This ball of stone is covered on the outside with a thin layer of earth. Whenever you see men digging a deep hole, watch them. Very soon they will strike rock.

This earth on which we live goes reeling, rolling and turning round the sun. The sun's rays are on it all the time at some place or another. Even at night when the sun is on the half of the world on the opposite side to where you live, the effects of the sun are still with you. By this I mean it has left sufficient warmth behind it so that you are nice and comfortable until the next day. Besides creating light the sun gives great heat, though it is millions of miles away.

The moon also gives us light, but remember its light is only the reflection cast by the sun against the dead, cindery ball. If there were no sun the moon would be useless, for it has no light of its

own. The moon is closer to us than the sun is. It is about 240,000 miles away.

Wise men who have studied the sun tell us that at one time there were no planets and no earth, no moon nor anything. Only the sun existed. It was a great, blazing, solitary mass, much bigger than it is now. For centuries it moved through space, all solitary.

One day there was a great collision. Another great, blazing ball, greater than the sun, came tumbling out of space. It was travelling in the opposite direction to the sun and when they came close together great masses were wrenched away from the sun. Molten metal, gases, rocks and stones were thrown out into space. When the disturbance was over and the sun moved on again into the distance, the force of gravitation pulled these various flying masses together and formed the earth. So you see we are really part of the sun, but only a very tiny, tiny portion. Since that time the world on which we live has gradually become cooler and cooler on the outside, and this made life and vegetation possible. But the sun has been a good friend, and has kept us from getting too cold, except at the north and south poles where the sun's rays seldom reach. There it is a solid mass of ice and snow, and nobody can live nor can anything grow at those extremes. The earth's motion round the sun is an elliptical path, occupies 365 days, and this is how we count our years. Besides this the earth has a daily rotation on its axis from west to east which occupies 24

hours, upon which depends the rising and setting of the sun.

Without the sun there would be no flowers, no fruit, nothing would grow, for everything that lives requires light and warmth. All would be simply a dark, ice-bound mass. That would be the world.

Think of the sunless home, cold and cheerless, without beauty and without love. That kind of a home would not be worth living in. But surely a home could never be like that? Yes, it can, if the people in that home have no love in their hearts. Love is the sun of the heart. A loveless heart! Just you consider what kind of a being that would be that had in his heart no warmth, no love, but was just ice-like.

If you want the sunlight of love in your heart, you must open the doors and let Jesus come in. He, the Son of God, represents the most perfect love that may surcharge and remake the atmosphere of the moral and spiritual world in which men live. The warmth and tenderness of His spirit is as necessary in producing the beautiful things of character as the sun is necessary in producing the beautiful things of nature. Let Him into your heart.

WHAT SIR THOMAS DID

SIR THOMAS LIPTON, the millionaire merchant, told me, in a recent conversation, what the inspiration was that carried him from poverty to riches. He said:

“To make things comfortable and happy for my mother and father. That was my aim, and I thank God it was realised.”

When he was a very young boy, Sir Thomas—of course he was just plain “Tom” then—was working for a company for four shillings (one dollar) a week. His mother, who was very poor, told him one day to ask for one shilling a week increase—only 25 cents more a week. Always willing to do his mother’s bidding, he accordingly went up to the private door of the manager, knocked, and was admitted. He approached the “big man” and plainly stated his needs. But the manager refused point-blank and said:

“You will get five shillings a week when you are worth it, and that is not yet.”

So little Thomas Lipton left and found another job. After working in different shops and places for several years and gaining what experience he could, he started a little shop of his own in Glasgow, Scotland. He was so poor then that he had to make his bed in a long box underneath the counter. Customers, however, found him courte-

ous, giving always a good article at a fair and reasonable price. So, continuing like this for a number of years, his business grew to such large proportions that he had to take a bigger shop, then another one, and now his shops are counted by the hundred.

Of course he sells tea, as every groceryman does, but to be sure of the quality he grew his tea. But you cannot grow tea in your back garden, nor even anywhere near home. You have to go away off overseas, away down south where it is very hot, in the Indian Ocean. Just look up the map and see how far that is from England or where you live. In this ocean, off the most southern part of India, you will see an island called "Ceylon." Well, it was away off there that he went, for he had learned through reading books and handling many kinds of tea, that this was one of the best places in all the world to grow it.

Now, to grow tea you have to have vast plantations and a whole lot of natives to work for you, because we people of the northern climates cannot live in the very hot weather that is necessary for growing the tea plant. Just look at the very next package of tea your mother buys, and you will see for yourself that it must mean a lot of work and a great deal of trouble and care to prepare it ready to put in the tea-pot. Tea is nothing but the dried leaves of the tea plant, but it takes a lot of experience and understanding to blend it so that it will have the flavour you like. All this Thomas Lipton did, and the people liked it, so his trade grew. Just like any good deed you may do,

it makes you famous very soon if you keep on doing the very best you can for others.

Don't be afraid to do things for others, it will pay you in the end. So, day by day, year by year, this man continued doing his very best in no matter how small a branch or part of his business. He also established great farms to grow all sorts of things, including pigs. They were fine pigs too, just the right kind to make bacon and ham.

In this way, through mounting great difficulties, he became famous for his good things to sell. Of course it took many years of hard work, unending toil for ever so long. But remember, nothing worth while is gained quickly nor easily. Weary, indeed, at times, but never sad, he climbed the hill of hardship to fulfil his great aim, to make his poor parents comfortable and happy. When a day came, such as we all experience, when we feel discouraged and want to throw the whole thing overboard, to "throw up the sponge," as the saying is, he held on firmly.

"No," he said, "I must not give up just because it's hard. That spells failure. Failure? There is no happiness in failure. I must and I will persevere again for I owe a debt of service to my father and mother. They must be made happy. It would surely break their hearts if I failed."

In this way the inspiration enabled Tom to get over the discouragements that otherwise would surely have caused him to give up, and say, "It is useless. It is useless."

Fifty years after, when he had been knighted

by the King of England and made Sir Thomas Lipton, he had given his great yacht, called "Erin," to the British Government as a hospital ship for wounded soldiers during the Great War.

One day, quite recently, the head of the same company, where Sir Thomas worked when a boy and where he was told he was not worth a shilling a week more, wrote to him. This big employer begged the favour of his influence to procure for his niece a post on the hospital ship, "Erin." Sir Thomas gladly complied.

You see, children, the inspiration to serve his mother and his father had lifted him very high. From a little, under-paid shop-boy he rose to the place where he could make large gifts to his fellow-men.

No life makes a proper beginning that has not any aim. And no aim can carry a life to achievement which has not a good and a high end.

What is to be your aim in life?

It may be that your father and mother are not poor and this therefore cannot call you to service, but as you grow older and see more of life you will see that all around you are other boys and girls, and men and women, who have not the advantages and happinesses which are yours. Jesus said, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye?" And so we must learn to love and to serve, not only those who love us and know us, but also those who do not know us, and even those who do not love us.

To do this is to love and serve Jesus. So you

see if you make it your end in life thus to serve Him who "was despised and rejected of men," you will always be sure of the highest aim and the truest success.

CHASING WITCHES

MY daddy is a flying man, isn't he?" asked Richard, looking up from the picture book he held in his lap.

"Yes, an aviator," replied his mother, thinking of the loving father who was away off Overseas with the Flying Corps.

"When he comes back I want him to teach me to fly. Wouldn't it be nice, mother?"

"Very nice, dear, for then the war would be over, victory ours, and we shall all be happy together again."

"Will you write daddy a letter, mother dear, and tell him I want him to be sure to remember all he knows about flying? Perhaps he may find time to write me if he is not coming soon. Ask him, will you?"

"What gave you the idea that you want to go up in an airship, Richard? What good can you do?"

"See this picture, mother?" and he held up the story-book with pictures in it of witches riding on brooms. "If those witches can really fly on those old brooms, I want to chase one in an airship to see where they go. Where do they go, mother?"

"That I do not know. Does it not tell you in the story-book?"

"No, it just says—'and the old witch saddled

her broom and flew off across the moon to the land where all the witches dwell.' ”

“Then I will write right away.” And mother and little Richard did write. Richard added at the bottom of his mother’s letter: “Daddy dear: How can I find out where the witches go to when they fly away on a broom? Have you met any? What is the best way to find out? Is it by flying after one in an airplane? Please, I do so want to know.”

In about five weeks the postman brought a letter. It was a big letter, ever so bulky. There was great excitement as Richard awaited the opening of the letter by his mother. His mother read the letter from beginning to end. It told of a wild and daring feat that Richard’s father performed in a death to death struggle among the clouds. It was with two enemy airships. Guns were fired, bombs dropped, and all sorts of attempts made to capture his father. These airplanes chased his father’s machine ever so high up in the sky. But Richard’s father kept on going up, up, up, higher than he had ever been before, and with great skill circled over the airships that pursued him, and he succeeded in destroying them both. He disabled the machines by well-aimed shots that stopped the engines from running. So the enemy ships fell to the ground and smashed to thousands of pieces.

“And this is one of the pieces,” wrote his father. To the letter was pinned a small piece of screen, of which the wings or planes were made on the machines that had crashed to their doom. Examining the odd fragment of fine, silky material,

Richard discovered this rhyme written on it in very small letters:

“When you have seen
This piece of screen,
You’re sure to dream,
Where Witches have been,
Up in the sky,
Ever so high,
Near the Moon,
On an old broom.”

That night Richard did dream. He was beside his father in his famous airplane. They mounted up so swiftly it took his breath away. Up, up, up they climbed, almost perpendicularly. Richard looked down. Everything was falling away from him. Trees, houses, cities, rivers, mountains, all seemed to be receding. All things on the face of the earth were growing smaller and smaller as he kept mounting higher and higher. The swaying of the machine by a gust of wind frightened him, but he held on and looked at the many wonderful things that only airmen can see.

At last things grew so small on the earth that nothing could be distinguished. The earth seemed but a grey mass; not a living thing, not a habitation was visible now. Smaller and smaller the earth grew. Richard was sure it was round just as the teacher at school told him. Very soon he found it looked just like a small ball. It kept on shrinking until it was as small as an orange, then like an alley, then like a marble, and then like a pea—then it vanished altogether.

"Now we are among the clouds," his father whispered in his ear.

Through the wet and misty rain clouds they sped, ever onward, higher and higher, until Richard grew quite uneasy as to ever being able to get back home again. He thought they would surely miss the earth, now that it was so small, and he feared they would land on some other planet and never see his mother again. He begged his father to return. But he said: "Don't you want to chase the witches?"

"I did, but it is too far and I want to return."

As Richard spoke he found himself in the moonbeams.

"Are we flying to the moon now?" he asked.

His father answered, "Yes." It was growing brighter and brighter as they approached the moon. In a very few minutes Richard saw a solitary black object flying towards him. It was a witch—just like in the pictures—with the familiar black flowing cloak that fluttered weirdly in the wind. He could clearly see her tall black hat, her hooked nose, and big, glaring eyes. She was riding astride an old broom. She seemed of a monstrous size and she flew past with such swiftness and she created such a stir and gust of wind that it completely turned the airplane upside-down. Richard was thrown out. He fell through space, oh, what a frightful fall! It was a long fall to earth again. At last he reached it, but when he did he bumped his head and then awoke to find himself lying on the floor beside his bed. Somewhat dazed by the knock, he gazed up at his bed

and exclaimed: "Gee, that was a long fall for such a short distance. I never knew it would take so long to fall out of bed. That was an awful dream. Guess the witches don't care about visitors. I'll have to write my daddy about this, 'cause I don't want to see any more witches, nor do I ever want to fly."

When he did write, his daddy replied:

"Little boys, and girls too, should keep away from witches, and all things that are not real and true. Do those things that are necessary in life; learn things worth while. Life is short and to make the best use of it we must be careful not to waste time on foolish pursuits, vain pleasures, or selfish desires. Follow the studies that improve your mind, for a wise man and a wise woman are those, who, as children, study so that they can understand difficult things. That is the way to truth and to God. Think of the two lines:

"In the world there is nothing great but man,
In man there is nothing great but mind."

That means God created us, you and I, men and women, as the best thing there is in the world, and in you He placed a mind and a heart, and it is your duty to fulfil God's plans by learning all you can, so that your heart and young mind will be great; great in the things that are worth while. You can be the greatest man or woman in the world if you will only try and never give up trying.

A RIOT OF ROSEBUDS

RECENTLY I was in a gentleman's garden. He was asking me about my children. Then I enquired: "Have you no babies?"

With a wave of his hand to the right, he replied:

"These are my babies."

Looking around I saw a riot of rosebuds.

He then began to tell me about his family of rosebuds: how he had to care for them; feed them, give them clear, cool water to drink in the evening; shade them from the sun and heat of the day with the strangest little parasols you ever saw in your life. Thus he spent much of his time and a lot of his money. But the roses that came to bloom were worth all the care, for they were very beautiful. They took many prizes at Rose Shows all over the world. The gentleman's sideboard held many shields and cups, and on his study table were rows of medals,—all trophies for having grown the most beautiful roses.

"Your Rose Children are easier to bring up than mine," I told him, thinking of three rather wild boys at home.

"Not so easy," he replied. "They are a great care and there are many difficulties to contend with. There are slugs, and worms, and caterpil-

lars, and greenflies, and blight. These all destroy the roses if they are not kept away. The most difficult of all to keep away is the greenfly. You can see a slug and destroy it. You can make the ground unhealthy for worms. Caterpillars are easily removed. But the greenfly is the colour of the stem and the foliage, and is difficult to see. Besides it is quite small. When one thinks that everything is all right with the Rose Baby, the greenfly works its way down through its growing leaves and destroys both shape and colour."

Almost in tears the wealthy gentleman related a very pitiful story:

"One of my very best, largest, most promising of rosebuds, which I cared for so tenderly, died yesterday."

"That was indeed sad," I sympathetically agreed. "And how did that happen?"

"It was a bud that would have become a most fragrant rose," he related. "A big, deep, dark-red rose, of a most rare variety. It was to be ever so large. The largest kind I had ever tried to raise. The petals of this variety are as velvet, so soft and thick. This particular bud grew on a beautiful, straight, strong stem. Each morning I rose early to attend it, ever since it was a tiny bud. As the sun rose higher and higher, I again went to it, and shaded it from the hot rays with this special little parasol I had made. When the wind blew strong and I thought the stem was in danger of breaking, I protected it with a wind shield. That rosebud grew and seemed perfect in its loveliness. Not a thing ailed it. It was to all

appearances healthy in every detail. There was no doubt in my mind that it was sound and free from all insects. I felt so sure of its perfection that I became a trifle, just a trifle, careless with it yesterday. I was so sure nothing could occur to spoil it, you see.

"But last evening I went to it and made the closest examination I ever made of that bud, to make up for my laxity during the day. It was too late. To my dismay I noticed a greenfly just inside the tender bud. Looking more closely I noticed it had destroyed the tiny inner petal. This spoiled the pet rosebud. It was no longer possible for it to grow into a perfect rose. It was useless because of the evil work of that nasty, deceptive and destructive greenfly. I destroyed the bud instantly. That was the only way to destroy the greenfly hidden inside. The rose with the bad heart had to be plucked out and thrown away. None like that are of any use; only the pure good ones can be grown."

Boys and girls, the greenflies of character are jealousy, selfishness, untruthfulness, deceitfulness, stinginess and cowardice. These creep in and destroy the beauty of your inmost thoughts. In time their evil influence becomes manifest in every word you speak and every deed you do.

The Baby Rose could not call out for help when the greenfly was attacking it, but you can tell the Mother Gardener about it and she will take means, just like the Rose Gardener, to help rid you of these deadly and destructive pests. If you desire your life to bloom out gladsome and radiant as a

summer rose, keep sharp watch on these evil dispositions, which, unless they are checked, will soil your thoughts and destroy all the wholesome strength and beauty of your life.

EAGLE OR WEASEL?

A FAMOUS Scottish preacher was taking a holiday in the Isle of Skye in the Western Hebrides. He was having a great time, and thought how lovely it all was to be so far away from the noise and sin of a great city.

But he was soon to see even around such peaceful and beautiful country surroundings that strange and evil things happen.

One morning he was out amid the hills enjoying the exquisite scenery, when near him there arose a great eagle on its shining wings. He watched it fly away up towards the sky until it became a speck. Taking out his field glasses he watched the eagle fly beyond where the naked eye could see it.

“Wonderful,” he thought, “powerful, majestic bird.”

But what was that that was happening now? The great bird is falling! Beak over tail it descends. Ah, it has righted itself again and is flying upward. Dear me, again it is coming down. Yet again it tried to right itself. This happened two or three times, and the last time it seemed to be successful in its upward course. But lo! look at it now! It is coming down. Will it not find its wings again? Down, down, down it continued to

come, and at length crashed upon a huge rock just near the place from which it had risen.

The old preacher was horrified and went to see what had really happened. What possibly could be the cause of its downfall?

I wonder if you will understand his discovery.

From under the battered body of the eagle there scurried a weasel.

A weasel is a small animal, noted for its blood-thirstiness.

The eagle had started out upon its flight with the weasel clutched tight in its talons, for eagles are carnivorous birds. No doubt the eagle's intention was to drink the weasel's blood as a refreshment when it was away up above the clouds. So the eagle had carefully lain in wait for the weasel to come out from among the rocks, and when it did the eagle's talons closed around it and carried it off.

It was a great mistake for the eagle to start off with the sinuous creature in its keeping. When it least thought of its danger the eagle was taken by surprise. The captured weasel gave a sudden squirm and worked itself free from the clutches of the eagle. Fighting in mid-air the animal was able to bite his captor's throat and drink his blood. This so weakened the great bird that in spite of the many attempts it made to free itself it was overcome and dropped to its doom.

Many young men and maidens whose lives looked as promising of success, and as fair as the upward flight of that eagle at the Isle of Skye, have been brought to nothing but destruction.

Why, you ask? Because they started out with something akin to a weasel in their keeping. Some bad habit, some selfish thought, some purely greedy ambition. All the strength that would have carried them up above the clouds and dangers was drawn away by this evil thing in their grip.

St. Paul understood this fact, with all its dangers and illusions, when he said:

“Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus.”

SOME ONE IS COMING

HE'S coming. He's coming." Everybody in the house shouted that he was coming.

Excitement ran high. Brothers and sisters, and mother and father were all in ecstasies. Why? Because "Some one was coming."

"In fact he will be here to-morrow morning," definitely added Mrs. Cummings, looking over the letter again as she re-read it at the supper table.

"I shall have to tidy up my room right away," spoke up Emily, who was the eldest child.

"Those vines on the front porch have needed stringing up badly for some time," remembered Sidney, the elder boy. "I shall get at the job immediately."

"I must mend my dresses, and see that my ribbons are ironed, and my pretty collars and middies pressed," Florence, who was ten years old, remarked.

"I shall get to work right off and groom the horse and wash the buggy. It must look neat and clean," added Ned, the fourth child, as he was very proud of his little pony and cart.

"As everybody seems to be getting very busy, I see that the sooner I get the front lawn cut and trimmed to look nicer the better will I be able to enjoy company," responded Mr. Cummings him-

self, as he saw how industrious his children were suddenly becoming.

That evening was one of hustle and bustle well on toward midnight. Every one was busy.

Who were they expecting, you ask? Well, just wait and you will see.

The mother of this busy household had the greatest amount of the responsibilities devolve upon her. Yes, Mrs. Cummings knew how to clear things up, for she enlisted the help of the children. All wanted to see who could do the most. Emily, Sidney, Florence and Ned, all had their specialty. You should have seen how Emily could polish up the piano. Sidney waxed the floors after he had hung the vines, and there was keen competition as to whether the piano or the floors shone the most.

Florence helped putting things to rights, replacing the cushions to look their best, and those cushions whose days for looking their best had gone she hid away out of sight in cupboards. Everything was dusted, cleaned, scrubbed, placed here and placed there, so that any one coming in would be most favourably impressed. Orderliness is always noticed by strangers, you know, and anything out of place is not only an eyesore but indicates untidiness. No, there must be nothing faulty left about.

Mother was up betimes, Daddy was having an early breakfast to go to the station, and all the children were busy dressing in their very best. The maid was in the pantry dishing up all manner of things to prepare good meals with, for she

too realized that we must do our very best when some one is coming.

Even the kittens were licking their soft paws and washing behind their ears more than they were ever noticed to do before. Strange, isn't it, how the spirit gets about?

Then, just as everything was looking its very best, wearing bright smiles because it was done willingly, Daddy arrived with the visitor.

"It is Grand-Daddy Cummings whom we have not seen for ever so long," shouted the children gleefully, for their parents had purposely kept that a secret.

My, how jolly Grand-Daddy was. He was by nature spick and span as any man could be. He loved all things and all boys and girls that looked and were as they were intended to be—that is, pleasing.

His visit was a happy one, both for himself and all the Cummings family. Many good and pretty things did he bring for every one. You see he came from far off and he could obtain beautiful and odd presents that were most delightful. Every one was happy, even the little kittens, for even they were remembered with some tiny bells made of shells tied to ribbons.

When Grand-Daddy had said good-bye, the Cummings family decided that they would so live each day that it would never again be necessary to hurry and scurry, and put on party manners, when he came again for a visit. They decided it would be better to keep one's party manners all the time, and they enjoyed their home so much

more when everything was in such first-class order, that they never wanted to let it run down again. Henceforth they were always ready for any visitor, however distinguished he might be.

Boys and girls, let me tell you a secret! Some day, I hope before long, you are going to have a very Great, a very Important Visitor. He is not coming to visit your father, or your mother, or your brother, or your sister, but you, only you. He is coming, not to your house, but to your heart. I can't tell when He is coming, and neither can you, but I know He is coming. Who is He? No, it is not King George, or President Wilson, or Marshal Foch. It is a Greater One than these. It is Jesus, who has known and loved you every moment of your life, and who gave His own life to serve you, long before you were born.

Now that I have told you that He is surely coming, you must take the Boy Scouts' motto, "Be Prepared."

You do not want this Visitor to see any nasty or unclean things in your heart when He comes. Evil things, and ugly things offend and wound Him, and I know you would never like to do that. Therefore you must "Be Prepared"—"For you know not the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh."

TRANSFORMED IN FLIGHT

IN the time of snow. When is that? It is winter, of course, and besides snow it is also the time of cold and frost. But snow, how do you like snow, children? Very much? It is great fun to play in it. You know what you can make with it, perhaps better than I can tell you. But how is it made—and what is it made of? If you know already, this story will interest you a great deal. If you do not know, then this story will be of even greater interest.

This is how snow, the beautiful glistening snow, is made. It is very important, so listen carefully and you will remember it all your life. When you are grown up and somebody asks you how you learned snow was made you will easily recall this story and be able to tell it to some other children that are bright like you and want to know.

First let me tell you snow is not white. Now you don't believe that, I suppose? What colour is it then, you ask? It is the same colour as ice, and you can no more say that water is white than you can say that icicles and snow are white. Of course, if water is churned up into a foam it looks white, like the "white caps" on the ocean, lake or river on a windy day, or when the billows dash up against cliffs, or water tumbles down a great water-fall. It is then water looks

white. Just the same way does snow appear white to us. Another example is glass. Look through a pane of glass. It is not white; it has no colour. Pound it up into powder, and what have you? A white-looking powder, of course.

So much for the colour. Let us leave that now and find out where the snow is made. It is made in the same place and in the same way as the rain that pours down in the summer. If a little snowflake could talk like a Fairy it would tell you this:

“I left the nice, warm rain-cloud away up in the warmer atmosphere just like an ordinary rain-drop. I thought I would remain just a plain drop of rain-water. To my great astonishment, as I descended from the upper atmosphere and passed through the colder air zones in my progress to the earth, I began to harden a little and very soon found myself transformed into a very light flake. I began changing when the temperature fell to freezing point, which is 32 degrees above zero. When I came fairly close to the earth the cold, blustering wind stirred up my energy and I felt as if I wanted to fly. You know how the invigorating winter air makes you feel so happy, healthful and playful? Well, I had the same bouyant feeling stir within me, and before I was aware of it I found I could fly. Oh, how swiftly I flew along. It was much nicer than just dropping to the ground, like a rain drop, and forming a pool. Whew, I wish I could tell you how I enjoyed that brisk flying trip through the air, round the corner, and then over the fence; and there,

seeing a pretty light in a window, I flew to it and rested on the window-sill. There I found myself surrounded by many brother and sister flakes, that looked very much like myself. More and more came and huddled close around me and we had such great fun, for sometimes the kind wind would whirr us around and we would be playing whirley-whirley together for a while and then rest again. Whenever we did this the children in the house, who were looking out at us and enjoying our frolics, clapped their hands. They were glad to see us come. They said they hoped it would snow hard, as they wanted to play with us. We were glad, too, that we were not rain drops, which would keep children indoors. Also they said it was beginning to look like Christmas, and Christmas, I heard, was a very happy time for children all over the world."

Thus the snow-flake would speak, and in telling its little story of its short existence would impart not only a truthful history of itself, but also thereby teach us a truth that applies to you and to me. You recall that the snow was quite comfortable in its first state as a rain-drop, but in its course through life it came into contact with the cold atmosphere and the blustering winds. Nevertheless these hardships, instead of harming the rain-drop, transformed it into a clear pure flake of glistening fairy-like beauty. In this state, this newly transformed condition, it, like millions of its brother and sister flakes, brought health and pleasure to many a child, like you, playing in the first snowfall of the season.

The cold and bitter experiences of life are not permitted by the good God, in order to ruin us, but His will is that by them we may be transformed into creatures of more striking purity, strength and beauty.

IN THE TIME OF SNOW

I WANT to tell you about a man who did a wonderful thing. His name was Benaiah, of Kabzeel, a village in the Holy Land. The people in the village of Kabzeel were very much troubled with wild beasts. Beasts came prowling about day and night, so the people made all sorts of traps. Sometimes a lion would come and steal away a child. Every one became very much afraid, and for very good reason, too, as lions are powerful animals. The people who lived in that village did all sorts of things to try and kill the wild beasts. One night a lion came roaring into the village and the people became very frightened. Not knowing what else to do, they went to a soldier who lived in the small town. His name I have already given you, it was Benaiah. He was told about the ferocious lion they heard roaring, and they asked his aid. So he took his sword and went out to find the lion. It was in the time of snow, cold for the hands, slippery for the feet,—the most difficult time to face a lion. The lion was in a pit. It had fallen into a trap formed with sticks and twigs over a hole. At almost any time he would break his way out, and wild with anger he roared and leaped about. It meant he would be free if not attacked and killed immediately.

Our valiant soldier approached the pit, and of this incident the Scriptures say:

“He went down into a pit to kill a lion in the time of snow.”

Can you see that man, down in that pit, with cold hands, the snow making it difficult to get a foothold, facing a lion? Yet he did not stop, but braved the lion and killed it.

You wonder why I tell you this story? It is for this reason: Lions go about in the world to-day threatening to devour boys and girls. These strong lions are the lions of appetite, self-will, conceit and pride, and when they make an assault on you, you must face them with boldness and courage, or they will most surely down you. You must not give up because your hands get cold, or because the path you tread is slippery and difficult. You must not hesitate a moment in attacking these beasts. If Benaiah had said, “Wait till the snow goes away,” he would never have killed the destructive lion.

Temptation is a test and if you will make the attempt, you can overcome and master it. Jesus said: “Resist the Devil and he will flee from you.”

LONGEST AND SHORTEST

I KNOW school-children do not like long words. You don't, and I remember I was the same when I began school life. So I know why. It is because they are hard to spell.

But this word I am going to talk about is easy to spell, and every one knows what it means, yet it is the longest word known.

It is a word of six letters—S-M-I-L-E-S—smiles.

That seems a short word, does it not? Then why did I say it was the longest one in our language? Because there is a M-I-L-E between the first and last letters.

It is long for another reason, too. Its effect goes the farthest. People with smiles are remembered the longest. You don't like a grouchy, stern, severe face, do you? Think of all the people you like best, and see if it is not those that have the broadest smile. How bright a smile is, and how smiles do brighten us up! Have you ever noticed it?

Did you ever notice another thing, too, about a smile? It is contagious. It spreads about and around to all near you. Another curious thing I found out about smiles is, that it is difficult to answer a smile but with a smile. When a person smiles at you, you have to smile back. It

comes natural, you don't have to try. It just happens there and then.

When boys and girls are waiting and smiling at your coming you know it while you are still a long way off. Their welcoming smiles make you begin to smile in return. That is a way smiles have with them. They are among the greatest of the things that make for happiness.

The war song which tells us to "Smile, smile, smile," helped the boys who fought in the Great War to be cheerful, merry and bright, when all around them was dangerous and uncomfortable, and it shows that smiles are meant for all occasions, even while facing enemies.

When you say there is nothing to smile about and all seems gloomy and troublesome about you, think of the person who wrote: "Pack up your troubles in an old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile," for he knows something.

I hear people say that it is difficult to smile when there is nothing to smile about, but I wonder where I could find a child that cannot find anything to smile about. Ask yourself if you have anything to smile about, and you will find you have not enough arithmetic to count up all the blessings for which you ought to smile.

You must smile for your loving parents, for all the food and good things they provide for you, for your home, your toys, your yard or garden to play in, and the flowers that bloom. Oh, ever so many things could be listed. It would make a list almost without end; for everything you know, everything that is in the world, all around and

above you, is worth a smile, yes, many, many smiles. Try to count them now, and after you have numbered ever so many things, you always have to remember you must be happy and smile because of God. God created you to smile, and He has given you a glorious world to be happy in.

Smile now and see how happy it makes you.

SLACKERS AND DESERTERS

WHY should I go to war?" asked the Slacker.

"Because your Country needs you," replied the Soldier.

"But why should I be made to do something I don't want to?" argued the selfish Slacker.

"Everybody in the world has to do things he does not like to do, even the very rich and the very powerful and independent, unless they are idiots," wisely replied the Soldier.

"Look what I have to leave behind," retorted the Slacker. "All the nice things that I have here, my automobile, my comfortable home and social position, my sweetheart, all these things and comforts that I love so much,—I would have to give them up. Let others go that have nothing."

Just then a pretty girl came up to where the Soldier and the Slacker stood.

"Hello! I mean good-day, Miss Dorothy," and the Slacker for the first time saw his sweetheart in the costume of a Red Cross nurse. "What does this mean?" he inquired of her.

"Father has just enlisted for Service Overseas, and I have too. I've come to say good-bye, unless you're going to join us?"

"Oh, no," replied the Slacker; "I guess there will be enough without me."

"Then we must part forever," she said, and passed on.

"That's a brave girl; I salute her," the Soldier said to the Slacker as the girl left. Then he asked: "Won't you join now? Your sweetheart is worth going for. You could win her back by helping to win the war."

"But I still have the many other things that I can't leave. I am so used to them, and it would be like being buried alive to be deprived of them," was the Slacker's reply. "Nevertheless, jump in my automobile with me and we will drive home to talk the matter over."

So the Soldier and the Slacker drove in the car together, as they had met two miles away from Mr. Slacker's home. He had been spending the day since early morning driving in his car through the surrounding country. This was about the only thing Mr. Slacker ever did, for he loved the sport of automobiling and devoted himself almost exclusively to this selfish and luxurious recreation. But accidents will happen to the most expert drivers, and what do you suppose actually occurred? Suddenly, in rounding a dangerous curve, the automobile skidded, and, as the road ran along the edge of a beautiful lake, the car went right over the embankment. Both men were thrown out into the water. The car was utterly ruined. Fortunately the water was shallow and the men waded ashore, thankful to find they had escaped any hurt.

"Well, now the car is gone," intimated the Soldier.

"Oh, but wait until you see our home. It is just around this curve. Father paid half a million dollars for it."

Just then the men came in full view of the beautiful house and grounds.

"Look there," said the Slacker as he gazed in wonderment. "What's up now? What are all the wounded soldiers doing tramping all over the place? This will never do," he concluded as he hurried his steps up the broad lawn leading to the main entrance. His father at this moment came out to meet him.

"See what a surprise I planned," explained the parent. "Your mother and I purposely wanted you to be away all day so that you would not be disturbed or annoyed by the alterations. We wanted to do something for our soldiers, and about a week ago I offered our home as a convalescent hospital. We can take an apartment in the city."

"Guess you'll have to go without me, Dad," said the son.

"Why, what is the matter?" enquired the father.

"I said to this soldier, whom I met on the road while I was driving my car, that I would not enlist because of the things I had to leave behind. But now they have all gone before," and he told of all that happened. How his sweetheart, Dorothy, became a nurse and left him, how his car was wrecked, and now he found his home given over to the soldiers.

"So I feel that I must go," said the son, "to

help win the war, which, when won, will give us back our home, for there will be no more wounded then, and after that, should I be spared, I will win back Dorothy."

And he did all these things, and he became a very happy man, happier than he had ever dreamed he could be, for he saw many things which helped him to appreciate everything more than ever before.

Now, children, let me tell you of some of the things that he saw, for I saw them, too. About a year ago when I was "Over There" passing through the city of Nantes in France, I saw a number of men chained together. Some were in uniforms as soldiers, others partly uniformed, some others were in civilian clothes. They were a depressed-looking lot of men, dirty, unkempt and wild-looking. It struck me as terrible and horrible to see men chained. I was puzzled and therefore asked one of the officers:

"What does this mean? Can you explain why the chains are binding those men?"

He told me: "They are deserters and slackers."

Then I understood and felt what it meant, this unfairness and disloyalty, this desertion in the time of a nation's crisis.

Since then, after I had returned to this country, I have been reading of desertions and of slackers on this side of the water. How men have been taking refuge in the woods, refuge from the call to protect themselves, their homes, all their possessions and their country. These people, these men, have no realisation of the discredit of their

conduct, but we who realise the dangers that confront the country know the unfairness of their attitude, both to themselves and to their fellow men. Their whole bearing is shameful and a disgrace.

I am sure that you children agree with me that disloyalty and desertion from a good and great cause that is being threatened by the forces of evil, is the meanest thing that can happen.

But military service is not the only kind of enlistment to which we are called. There is the high service of righteousness in every-day life—truth, unselfishness and kindness in the home and in the school and in your games. To desert from this service or to be a slacker in it is as vile and as wrong as anything that had been done by those men in Nantes, or those who have gone to the woods to escape their duty to their country. The only road is the straight road, and the straight road is loyalty and devotion to the Highest.

“Take up thy cross and follow Me.”

OUR GREAT WHITE ARMY

I WONDER what soldiers are for! Don't you wonder, too? Are you interested in soldiers? Of course you are. In these days our soldier men, dressed in khaki, stir our blood as they march past. How glad it makes every heart to know that these smart, strong, upright, well-drilled men in uniform are the men we depend upon to protect us from our enemies. Without these uniformed men our homes would not be secure against the depredations of those who are looking for our weak points to overcome us and become our masters.

The uniform of a soldier is a very important matter. It is by their uniform the soldiers are known. The uniform indicates not only to what country the soldier belongs, but also to which regiment. When I was a boy in England I loved to see the British Red-Coats. On a sunny day it is a fine sight to see hundreds upon hundreds of these soldiers marching along wearing the red coats. The brass buttons, gold braid and epaulets, contrasted with the red material, flash and glitter. Then the helmets, with trimmings also brightly polished, glisten and shine. Can you imagine me, or any other boy, wanting to be anything else but a soldier? I fairly jumped with joy.

Finer still, I recall the Scottish Highlanders. How majestic in appearance, their kilts swaying in rhythm as the stalwart men march along wearing the tall, bushy busbies on their heads! On parade, led by the stirring music of the bagpipes, on a march past in a grand review, these formidable-looking men formed an imposing spectacle I shall never forget.

On this side of the great Atlantic Ocean I have seen the soldiers of Canada and the United States, uniformed in khaki,—the service dress. Of course, I have also seen them in times of peace when the vari-coloured uniforms of the different regiments are worn. But before I come to tell you of the Great White Army I just want to say a word about the Great Khaki Army. There is nothing showy, nothing imposing nor elaborate about these uniforms, but it is in these uniforms our men do the actual work of serving the country to which they belong. When you see a man uniformed in khaki you know he is on active service. He may be a man returned from the fray, or about to go, or in training. No matter in what stage he may be a man in khaki means a man on service for his country. Men on regular active service are uniformed to carry out some special work for which they are trained and drilled. They are specially qualified to perform a duty, and each man and each unit to which he belongs has the same ambition to fulfil a particular function. There are the infantry, the cavalry, the artillery, the medical corps, the ambulance corps, and ever

so many other bodies which go to make up an army in defence of a country.

But do you know, children, and do you believe that you yourself have an army continually at your command and engaged in defending you? Perhaps you don't know, and I believe some older people also are not aware of the vast army wearing uniforms of white. White, you say, is not a serviceable uniform? It is. It is a very fine uniform, too. Who wears these uniforms of white? You ought to know about these soldiers, particularly because one army of them belongs to you. Every day they are on guard or fighting in your defence. Though they are wearing white uniforms they are on active service. Their name is rather extraordinary. Probably you will find it hard to remember, so I will spell it for you. It is, L-E-U-C-O-C-Y-T-E-S. Remember the name, Leucocytes, for that's the name of your army. What do they do? Where are they? How do they belong to me? That's a great story. Listen. In your body this army lives to keep you as well and healthy as you are. These leucocytes are for keeping out strangers and enemies from your blood. As you are aware the blood is made up of two kinds of corpuscles, the red and the white. The white corpuscles, properly called leucocytes, are the minute bodies which protect us against disease, and wage constant warfare against the numerous bacilli, microbes, bacteria and other elements of disease. If disease attacks your body, or if the wrong kind of microbes get in through a cut, then the white soldiers mobilise and surround

the enemy. Then, generally, the fight commences. Mostly the White Army is successful and conquers the invaders. But it happens occasionally that the intruder gets a firm footing and entrenches himself to withstand the efforts of the White Army which is fighting for you. Sometimes the intruder gathers sufficient strength to push back the White Army. Then the doctor has to be called. He comes along and gives some tonic to the little soldiers. He sends down something that helps them to gain strength and they return to the charge with new vigour, and win. That's what medicine is for.

Now, children, this world is a great body and there is a White Army in this world, too, that fights for health and right, and whenever evil shows itself the army charges and seeks to expel it. But after repeated harassing it is frequently the case that the Soldiers of the Cross get disheartened. They feel that they are fighting a losing battle at times. When that feeling comes on, take the precaution to call in the Doctor, the Great Physician, Jesus. He gives loving medicine which revives drooping spirits and sends them again into the fight with strength enough to win.

Remember this story, my children, because the time will surely come for you, who are little soldiers of Right fighting against the enemy, Wrong. When you feel defeat coming, or threatening you, go to the Physician, and all will be well. There is nothing more glorious in life than to be a little White Soldier clad in the spotless uniform of the soldiers of the Son of God.

THE POSTMAN

YOU have all seen the Postman. You all love the Postman, because he brings you Christmas cards, parcels and letters from your friends. The time for the Postman to come is looked forward to with great eagerness every day. As sure as the clock points to a certain hour just as certain is he to be seen coming up the street with his arms piled high with letters, papers and packages. Some or at least one is for you, and with gladness you spring to the door to welcome him. He knows it is for you because your name is written on it. What is it? It may be a letter full of good tidings, or it may be a parcel from a kind friend far, far away. The parcel is full of good things. Or it may be a paper or postcard with nice pictures. But the Postman doesn't know what is in the letter or parcel. That does not interest nor concern him. He only concerns himself with his duty in connection with that particular letter or parcel for you, and that duty consists in delivering the mail to the person whose name and address appears on the envelope or wrapping.

Why is it our letters travel to any part of the world for the small cost of a stamp? Has it occurred to you how wonderful this Postman business is? Think of it. Here is a little girl away over in far-away Italy. She trips down the street

and drops a letter into a little slot in the wall. All it has on it is your name and address. All she pays is a few cents for a stamp. Yet that letter travels away across the continent of Europe. It is transferred from train to train and then to a steamer. The steamer carries it across the ocean, thousands of miles. On landing it is again put on a train. This time it is carried on the Mail Express, the fastest train, which takes it many more thousands of miles across the new hemisphere, to California, if that is where you live. But though part of the address may read California it is probable that the town or village in which you dwell is miles away from the railway. If that is so its long journey still continues, but this time probably on a mail cart or packed on a horse's back. When it finally reaches the village post-office it is sorted out by the Postman. Then he starts out on his round and goes up your street, then looks for your number, and when he finds that he raps at the door and looks for you. He knows you, generally, but if he is not sure that you are the person to whom the letter is addressed, he asks you your name. That is when you get your first letter at a new address. After that he remembers you and hands you your mail without necessarily speaking a word. The address and name on the letter speak for themselves and your face, height, build, or colour speak for yourself. That is your identity. That is how a little boy in America is overjoyed in receiving a letter from his little girl friend who is in Italy or whatever other part of the world that particular friend may be in.

Is that not wonderful? There are millions upon millions of messages sent in this way all around the world. They arrive at their destination with a certainty and regularity that must astonish all who think about it. The Postman and his great organisation make it possible for letters and messages to be sent and to be received. This almost perfect system we have every confidence in, yet there is an absolutely perfect system of messages which we seem to have less faith in. Some young folks I know fear that God will not be able to find them with His messages and gifts. Because you live so far away from the big towns and the big churches, do not think that it makes any difference in finding you out. Do you not see that if men with the Postal Unions and the Postmen can work this miracle of delivery, how much easier and more certain God's system must be? God directs the delivery of all His messages in person. He influences all men the world over to perform His will and to supply your needs. God does not only know what country you live in, or town and street, but He also knows the house and the room in which you sleep. He knows the school to which you go and the meadow in which you play. Not only does He know your name, but He also knows your age, your height, the colour of your eyes, nay more, He has the very hairs of your head numbered. Your every thought and wish are known.

Now don't be afraid that your messages from Heaven will go astray. They will not. As sure as the Postman hands in the letter, more surely will God deliver His gifts.

"T. N. T."

T. N. T. What does that mean? What is it used for? I wondered a great deal about it, and this is why. I visited a large explosive plant, a munition factory, where this is the principal product. The manager was showing me all over the place and talking about T. N. T. Almost every other word he said was T. N. T.

"Now, sir, before we go another step, what does T. N. T. stand for?" I asked.

"It means Tri-Nitro-Toluol, the most terrible explosive in all the world," he explained.

Then he proceeded to show me a chunk of this stuff. When you see it just as it is manufactured, in lumps, it is a greeny-yellowish mass. "It is a product of coal-tar," my informer told me. "In fact," he continued, "nearly all explosives come in the first place from coal."

My friend of the factory handled this T. N. T. as if it were candy. Naturally enough I grew very nervous. But when he threw it up in the air I made a dive for the door. This made him laugh uproariously, so I returned. My face was white, I fear, when I came back to him to receive the advice not to be afraid.

He said: "It is not at all powerful until it is restrained. Restraint in a cartridge or a shell or

in a hole in the rock is necessary before any explosive can really demonstrate its power."

This information opened up a wide field of reflection for me. The idea that restraint was power hammered itself into my mind.

I had a vision then of a little stream I used to step across long ago,—just a little, laughing brook that meandered through the green meadows. It did not seem as if it ever might be of any use, but simply be sweet and lovely in itself. But I was never so mistaken. A man came and looked at the pretty little useless stream one day. Then he built a mill in a meadow through which this little stream ran. He built the mill because of that brook. No steam was to be used in that mill, no electricity. The babbling brook was to do the work instead.

The friends of the mill man laughed at him. But he got to work and dug a pond in that meadow, a large pond, and put sluice gates on the stream to let the water run into the pond. All night long the water from the streamlet flowed into the pond. The water rose until the pond was full. In the morning, at the outflow-end of the pond, the mill man had his water-wheel in place. He opened the sluice and away went the wheel turning round and round. And the wheel turned the machinery in the mill. For many years now the motive power in that little factory has turned out little articles that are sold all over the world. Tons and tons of them are shipped to America. Perhaps the little girls who are listening to this story have some of the very articles in their hair, yes, for they are hairpins.

So you see, children, how restraining a rustic stream in little England gives power to supply demands in great America. Think of it. Can you realize now how restraint is power?

Can this story mean anything to you? Why should it, you ask? Because restraint is power with you as with the T.N.T., that explosive, and the little brook. Curb the inclination of play when study time arrives. Hold back that temper that seeks to rage without good reason. Restrain your tongue when foolish words are forming themselves to flow. You will give yourselves reserves of power that will enable you to serve so well that your power and influence may achieve some great and goodly service, not only to your own friends, but to men the world over, whom you may never see, but who may rise up and call you "Blessed," and thank God that you have lived. Yes, restraint is power.

EYES THAT SEE ALL

DID you ever think what a blessing it is to be able to see? To look out on the world with its form and colour, its lakes and mountains, rivers, trees and all that grows is one of the greatest things we can do. How splendid it is to turn one's eyes up to the sky and behold the great blue arch so far above draped with its fleecy clouds! Evening sunsets, with all their beauteous colour formations changing continually until they fade away into utter darkness, are among the countless things we can enjoy through the sense of sight. To see, ah, how wonderful!

Then the night comes, with its deep obscuring darkness. All the great pictures of earth and sky become invisible. We cannot see anything in the dark. No, we were meant for the daylight. The night is only for the owls, and the cats. That's what we think. But there must be some one that sees in the night, for a great deal of work has to be done while the world sleeps. The trees keep on growing, the rivers keep on flowing, the clouds scud across the sky and the moon plays peek-a-boo behind them. Some one has to see that we are protected while we sleep. Who is it that can do all that and never doze at his post? Only One, —God,—whom you pray to before you tuck yourself into bed. He looks after all that goes on at

night as well as in the day. He never slumbers nor sleeps. The darkness and the light are both alike to Him. He sees all the time, and He sees everything and everybody everywhere.

The Bible says: "Thou God seest ME." So He does. Sometimes people think to frighten boys and girls by reminding them that they are seen by God in the darkness. It is only those, however, who have done wrong who are afraid and try to hide, just as Adam did when he hid himself in the Garden of Eden. It is true God sees when we do wrong, but it is also true, and this is the more charming thought, that He sees us when we do right, day or night. Every good thing to which we put our hand, every little act of kindness performed, is done in the presence of the Great Spectator of all our actions—God Himself.

You know how encouraging it is when you do anything to have your father or your mother watch you do it. How hard we try to do our very best, no matter what the task, in order to please them and make them glad. When you have done your best, how glad you feel! Your mother's pride is seen in the shining of her eyes. But ah, how changed is the look when you have done your worst. A look of pain is there and in your own heart is distress. Even if you do wrong in the dark you are troubled in mind and heart. I wonder why that is? I have wondered why often, but I have found out, too. It is because I am unwittingly conscious that my actions are observed.

Now you see how important it is to remember all the time that God is watching. How fine it is

to have Him see all the brave and beautiful in you! How happy it will make His heart!

It is not enough, however, to tell you that God sees what you do. He also sees what you need. Every day He sends the fruit and the flowers and the many things on which our bodies and our souls feed. Perhaps you do not realise it, but without His tending to these needs you would perish instantly. In the night, when all is quiet and those to whom we look for protection are asleep, God stands guard. He sees you all alone in your little bed in that dark, quiet house of yours. Have you ever seen Him watching? I have many, many times. God has many million eyes. They are the stars. You cannot close your shutter nor your blind so close that one star at least does not twinkle through. Haven't you noticed that, children? Always a star or two peeps in. That is God watching and on guard for you. Sleep soundly then, for God watches near, and live sweetly every day, for, lo! He sees.

"He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways."

THE BOY ON LONDON BRIDGE

LONDON is a great old town. Let's go to London. That's the only place in the world."

That is what I heard people say. I wondered why. But though I have been there often it was only a short time ago I learned the reason, so I wonder why no longer. What makes London "great" to my eyes I actually saw. What I learned and saw was this:

For nigh a thousand years people have lived on the mud banks of the River Thames. Over the Thames is the Old London Bridge you hear so much about. The same bridge you sing about in your games, for have you not played "London Bridge is Falling Down?"

This bridge is in the heart of London, and London is said to be the largest city in the world. Its streets are very busy with a strange and motley crowd of pedestrians. Rich and poor mingle in a wonderful way all hours of the day and night. Never, surely, was the great city so strange and weird a place as during the Great War. The streets were almost dark. The globes of the street lamps overhead were painted black except for a circle about the size of the palm of your hand at the bottom. This permitted only a small ray of light to be cast on the roadway underneath. By

this means the city was rendered as invisible as possible to the raiding enemy airplanes.

One evening I was crossing London Bridge to get a train for Brighton.

In the gloom I noticed ahead of me the strange little figure of a boy walking with a crutch. I could just make out the withered leg dangling limply against the stem of the crutch as he plodded his way homeward. Dear little fellow. He must have been a match-seller or maybe he sold newspapers at some street corner to earn a scanty living. As I walked behind him I felt so sorry for the little chap out in the rainy night, for it was long after ten o'clock. How hopeless and terrible it seemed to me!

Behind me I heard some one coming. He was running, and I heard the squelchy sound of bare feet in the puddles. It was another boy. He passed me in the ring of light from one of the darkened lamps. Truly his was as comical a figure as the boy's ahead was sad. The bare-footed youngster had on a pair of trousers that had been made for a man. The trouser legs were all folded up to give him freedom for his feet. On top of this he had on a huge jersey folded up almost to his chin. The sleeves were tucked back almost to his shoulders.

"What a little ragamuffin," I thought. "And as wild as a boy can be, I'll warrant."

There now, he has got alongside of the crippled boy. The little ragamuffin stopped. "Is he going to harm the cripple?" I hurried up to within a short distance and this is what he said:

"Say, kiddie, are you going my way? Where d'ye live? Down by the 'Elephant and Castle,' eh? You're tired, I'll bet. Let's see you 'ome."

Down he slithered on his knees on the wet sidewalk and hitched the little cripple up on his back. I stood by and watched in amazement. That heroic little figure in the big jersey with his lame burden on his back, and the crutch dangling down in front, started to trot away through the rain and mist down "Elephant and Castle" way.

Ah, boys and girls, some of these poor, hungry, ill-clad and neglected children can show some of us comfortable folks how to be unselfish. This was one of the noblest acts I ever saw. It was a great act. Would to God we could see more of them on our streets. Surely if the poor, half-clad, half-educated little sons of London slums can so serve one another, we who know more and better than they can be called upon to give examples higher than they. Such acts make a place great. That's why London is a "great" place to me. What are you doing to make your town, your city, your home or your environment great? Shall we make up our minds never to miss the chance of serving? Remember the little boy on London Bridge when you are tempted to pass by those less fortunate than yourselves.

THE OTHER PEOPLE

DID you ever wonder why you were able to travel on the railways in great ease and comfort for the cheap rate of approximately two-and-a-half cents a mile? I have wondered why, and I am just like yourselves, always wondering why we have this and that which people long, long ago could not enjoy, no matter how much wealth they possessed.

Talking about railway journeys, think of those great comfortable cars you have provided for you to live in while being transported from one city to another. In the summer these cars have whirring fans to keep you cool, and in winter the steam is turned on in the radiators and coils to keep you cozy and warm. If you travel at night there are nice soft berths to sleep in, and on long journeys a fine dining car accompanies you so that you can enjoy a hot dinner. You can get all the meals on a train now, and in fact you can travel for a week without needing to get off the train at all. Everything is provided and in splendid style. Sometimes better than you get at home.

Everybody likes to be comfortable on a long journey by train and to feel that the hours will pass happily. But it does not always happen that way. On my last railway trip I had hoped to master a book. It was a long journey and I

wanted to make good use of my time. I wished very much to become absorbed in its fascinating contents.

Have you ever been eager to make yourself comfortable and engross yourself in the pages of a good book? If you have you will know how anxious you are to have no one disturb you.

But I was disturbed. No sooner had I commenced reading than two ladies who were sitting behind me in the parlour car began talking with such eagerness and enthusiasm that all my thoughts were distracted. I was completely put off my reading. At first I felt cross with the ladies who made reading impossible and I wished they would be quiet. On second thought, however, I realised that they had as much right on the train as I had. Moreover I knew that I could not travel in such comfort and ease unless there were other people travelling too, for you know railway companies don't run trains for single individuals. It takes a lot of people to pay their fares in order to make a long railway journey possible.

This started me thinking about the other people upon whom I was dependent for much that made life satisfactory and so full of nice things that I could not enjoy if it were not for the other people.

By-and-bye I got out of the train when I reached the city for which I was bound. Hardly had I got out the dépôt and was walking along the street, when a man butted into me. In his hurry and disregard he all but knocked me over. Again the same feeling of great annoyance came over me. But fortunately I remembered that the

streets were not made for me alone, and the sidewalks were not made simply that I might walk on them. No, it was not for me, but because other people wanted to walk on them, that the city made such nice sidewalks at all. All manner and kind of people forget all about the others, and some automobilists think the highways are made for them. These auto drivers bark their claxons at you when you cross the street as if they alone had the right of way. They forget that they in all their lifetime could not pay for the miles of street that they use if they alone wanted to own them. It surprised me amazingly how inconsiderate every one seemed to be of the other people when at the same time he was making use of and enjoying the privileges that are only obtainable through the others.

Some little boys and girls, I am sorry to say, are unkind and inconsiderate in their actions to other boys and girls who attend their school. Yet if it were not for the many I can assure you there would not be those lovely schools nor those capable teachers. These could not be had if only you went to school with one or two playmates whom you like better than the other pupils. You have all got to learn to think of the other people and to be grateful to them too. Jesus has for His great commandment to every one of us, "Love one another." This just means that you must give the other people a place in your heart. If you will get this well into your mind and be considerate to others you will fulfil God's greatest law and make

a happy place for yourself in the world. Do not get cross about other people; always think of the many privileges you enjoy because of them, and you will live gladly, wisely and well. Be considerate and others will consider you.

A SEED IN THE TOWER

A LANDLORD, a friend of mine, bought an estate. It was a large place and on it was a great lake, some very high hills, three considerable forests and four little villages. It was a fine beautiful old estate. When this rich new landlord took possession of this charming territory and went to live in his grand house, the people who lived in the villages began to come and ask him to make all kinds of changes and repairs. He told most of them to wait till he had a chance to look around. To one, however, he listened with interest and care. He was a minister of one of the village churches. What was the trouble, do you think?

"My church is beginning to crumble and threatens to become a ruin," said the clergyman. "Won't you come right away to see what can be done to save the building?"

The landlord went immediately to see the church. He found that the roof was rotten and likely to fall at any time. The walls were all discoloured inside from the damp. Everything within smelt musty with decay. Looking about carefully for an explanation the landlord asked the minister:

"What is the cause of all this destruction? Surely there is something very strangely wrong to do such great damage."

But the minister could give no satisfactory explanation. So a builder was sent for and he came from far away by train. After examining the fabric the builder made an extraordinary report, without giving the reason for the strange depredations. He said: "Unless repairs are executed at once the tower of this little church will crash down on the roof and bring the walls down also. The whole edifice will be but a heap of stones."

The landlord was rather mystified. Puzzled, he asked whether it was possible to explain how the church got to be in that condition.

"Well," replied the builder, "the trouble is at the base of the tower. That tower stands upon certain corner-stones, and two of these have been pushed out of place by a little bush that started growing in a crevice. Some time or other the seed from a whin-bush was blown up into the air and lodged in a little hollow between the stones. Dust from the street was blown up and covered it. The rain came down and watered it. The sun came out and warmed it, and it began to grow. With the years it grew stronger and stronger until its roots forced the stones apart. Then the rain began to trickle in between the space that was made. Down into the wood-work the wet worked its way. Soon the timbers began to rot, and the decay spread throughout the rafters and all the supporting beams, thus developing the condition of affairs as they are to-day."

Boys and girls, there is a great lesson in this true story for you. Most of us are just like that little village church. We have a tower in our life.

That tower is called "Character" and it is based on the corner-stones of truth, honesty, love and goodness. As long as these corner-stones hold together the tower will remain unshaken. Our life will remain weatherproof, and the church we call our body will stand strong and secure through the years. But if we neglect vigilance our carelessness will give the chance to some whin-blown seed to find a lodgment and if left alone it will grow and expand until the disaster that threatened that little church on the highland hillside will overwhelm us. You see, children, we need not think that we have only to look out and watch for those things that are obviously wrong. A growing whin-bush is not a crime, but the mischief is caused by its growing in the wrong place. Anything that seeks to separate truth, honesty, love and goodness—these corner-stones of character—is a crime against your life. You must therefore be vigilant, strong of character, not easily led. Allow a place in your life only for the things that will enable you to survive the storm of the years. Remember as you never remember anything else that ceaseless vigilance is the price of security.

Let me add that the little village church was repaired immediately, put into a sound and secure condition again, and every Sunday the people in that village of the glen wend their way to this house of prayer. If you find that truth and honesty have been separated by some unnecessary thing, call in the Great Master Builder. He will re-adjust the corner-stones and keep the tower of character pointing straight up to God.

TALKING MACHINES.

I WONDER why boys and girls are called "talking machines" sometimes. Even before gramophones were invented (of course that is not so long ago) I heard people say to children that they were "little talking machines." I wonder why! When I wonder about something I try to find an explanation. So I went to a gramophone factory and took a boy and a girl with me.

"I want to find out how gramophones are made," I said to the manager.

He looked at us three rather queerly, particularly eyeing the eager expressions on the faces of the two little folks, one on either side of me holding on to my hands. Then he said: "It has taken years of experimenting to get our machine up to its present state of perfection, and the important parts are the secret of our inventor and are patented. We cannot show our secrets to strangers."

"But sir, I must find out. I am a minister and I promised to tell my children at church next Sunday all about talking machines. Will you let me talk to your inventor?"

"Yes," replied the manager, and he showed us into a queer part of the factory called the "Experimental Laboratory."

By this time the two children with me had become so talkative at seeing the strange interior

of the factory that we could hardly hear ourselves. This prevented me from catching the inventor's name, so I am obliged to call him Mr. Inventor.

"Mr. Inventor, will you be so good as to tell me why children are said to be like talking machines,—like the wonderful machines you have invented here?"

Looking at the two expectant young people with me, he said: "In the olden days we used the term 'chatter boxes.' Since then it seems the times have made children more precocious. A thing said or done in their presence is more accurately retained in their minds—not so absolutely as on a gramophone record—but still reproduced with striking truthfulness."

Then he showed us how a record was made. "This is a blank record," Mr. Inventor explained, showing us a disc made of black composition, much like any other record you buy in the stores. This he placed in a machine resembling a gramophone, with a horn on it connected with what he called a "reproducer."

"Now you and your two little friends can ask me all the questions you wish."

So we did ask many questions. First the little girl, then the little boy and then I did. Some of the questions could not be answered. There always are some of this nature, especially from children. But Mr. Inventor told us many things, and explained carefully the parts he showed us. He told us about the sound box, the most important and most delicate instrument on the machine, on which depended the clearness and distinctness

of the sounds reproduced. He told us how a diamond-pointed needle gives the most distinct sound. Oh, ever so many things he told us. But most remarkable was what he left to the conclusion.

"Now," he said, "listen." And he turned to the machine on which he had placed the blank record, which we had forgotten all about, took out the record and showed it to us. It was no longer blank. It had tiny indentions in circles all over its surface.

"The record," explained the inventor, "has been as receptive as your brain. It has taken up what was spoken just now. It can repeat it."

And it did, for Mr. Inventor put it on the ordinary gramophone in his laboratory, and do you know, children, our entire conversation was repeated with greater accuracy than any one of us could repeat it.

"But that is only as far as the talking machine is like a child," said the inventor. "It repeats, it gives forth an imitation of the exact sounds, or words, that go into it. Children repeat what they hear with a fair amount of accuracy. Often they remember things better than grown folks, because their minds are more blank and the early impressions are the deepest. The grooves on the pliable mind sink further in, that is why children are like talking machines. But we are careful to take up on records only things that are worth while. Sometimes mistakes occur and we have to destroy the records with the bad impressions made by the mistakes. No one would want to buy records with bad sounds on them. So the greatest care is taken

when making a record that no other sounds are made or words spoken, than those intended to be taken up by the machine. All records with bad impressions are useless and have to be remade."

We thanked Mr. Inventor as we left the factory, and we carried away this great secret, which I will tell you. Your minds are given you by God, the Great Mechanic of the Universe. He has made you, little talking machines, with a very sensitive brain on which to record the good things you see and hear. Let no mistaken impressions appear on that record of yours. Let in only the things that are worth while repeating, for it is a sad thing for a boy or a girl to have a record with things on it that make that boy or girl worthless. If mistakes have been recorded remould your mind right away before they are engraven and liable to be repeated. Above all, my children, remember you are not a mere talking machine. Your mind can think as well as repeat. Your mechanism is not of man's making, therefore greater things are expected of you than any wonderful invention, even though it can repeat things better than we can. Let the word of God be engraven on your minds, for what is engraven there must serve you all through life. What the poet Burns said is true:

"Time but the impressions deeper make,
As streams their channel deeper wear."

TERRORS OF THE TANKS

RUMBLING, tumbling, crashing and pitching, the men in the fighting tanks are hurled into the enemies' midst. Peering out through only a small pinhole, the commander and driver are the only two men of the crew of a "Willie" tank, besides the gunners, who get a peek at what is going on outside. The tank mechanics, who are in charge of the 400 horse-power engine furnishing the motive power, are huddled in cramped positions in the bosom of the crawling steel creature. They see absolutely nothing, neither can they hear anything, the unmuffled explosions of the powerful motor, confined within the resounding steel walls, making a deafening racket.

All this and a few more uncomfortable facts I learned from a tank mechanic, the only survivor of his crew, when I told him I wondered why the tank did such wonders in helping to win the war.

"We are just as helpless as Jonah in the whale," said the mechanic. "Only it is hotter in the tank, for the heat of the engine, the lack of ventilation, and the sun's rays beating on the steel plates make the temperature almost unbearably hot. It is stifling with the exhaust gases, the smell of oil, and the powder of rapid-firing guns. Our bodies are sweaty and greasy. The chattering and rumbling steel mass, with us sweltering in-

side, waddles into action, dipping into shell craters, forcing itself through the dense wire entanglements, violently tumbling forward into trenches and gives its crew some terrifying moments. These sudden ups and downs during the whole time in action force us to hold on with might and main. We should otherwise be hurled backward and forward until the very life was shaken out of us. In addition to this there is also a rocking from side to side over all manner of unevenness encountered. Tanks are too clumsy to go around obstacles, they have to go over them. Overcoming these natural and evident obstacles is one of the great factors that made the tanks so valuable in helping to win the war.

"In addition to this, tanks have the resisting power to withstand these hard knocks and also protect their occupants against every destructive missile, except the very high explosive shell. Rifles, machine guns or shrapnel could not touch us. But when one of the huge shells scores a square hit that penetrates our magazine, then twisted steel and dismembered bodies of men are scattered over many acres of ground. I had occasion to see one of the big tanks lying on the ridge near Courcellette. One shell had hit the machine, and the men were completely annihilated.

"So you see the tank crews have their tribulations while they send terror into the heart of the foe they are fighting. A ride in a tank is by no means a pleasure trip," said the tank mechanic, "especially when you think of how little would be left of you or the tank, were the large quantity of

ammunition and gasoline that is carried fired by a shell.

“A tank usually carries six guns in all; three are field pieces, six or nine pounders. These are the terrors that have turned the tide toward victory. One of the guns is at the hand of the tank commander, who is seated in the foremost part of the ‘monster steel fort on wheels.’ The driver of the tank sits beside the commander. Another gun points directly to the rear. The other four are mounted in turrets just like a fort. Three of these take care of the front and the two sides. The fourth one is mounted in a swivel tower on the top of the tank and can sweep around in a complete circle.

“In the centre of the tank, behind the commander and driver, are the engines. On each side of the engines are aisles only nine inches wide, and along these aisles are the racks holding the tools and ammunition. Back of the engines are the tank mechanics, who attend the engines. On signals from the driver the mechanics alter the gears that steer the machine. A tank cannot be steered by simply turning a wheel like an automobile. To swing the tank to the right the caterpillar tread on the right side is stopped, making the right tread act as a pivot on which the tank turns until the proper direction is attained. Then the right caterpillar tread is put into motion again and the tank continues in that course. Thus the progress, slow, noisy, but formidable, is made, carrying us amidst a terrified enemy that is bound to flee or be destroyed.”

Boys and girls, these adventures of the men in the tanks are like the hardships we have to live through in life if we want to conquer obstacles and come out on top, victorious. Life is a battle. It is a real fight, and, to withstand the death dealing enemies that attack you, heed the Great General's advice, which He wrote in His Book called the "Ephesians,"—"Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For ye wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Now, let me tell you, it is no easy thing to wear this armour, for when you put it on you will immediately become a mark for the assaults of the powers of evil. You will be harassed, tempted, tried; but like the men in the tanks you will emerge victorious, and not only so, but unlike them you will always be victorious, for a high-explosive shell may annihilate even that great steel-clad monster, the modern "tank," but the armour of God is sufficient protection against every foe. Remember then, "Put on the whole armour of God." In no other way can you be adequately prepared for victory in the fight for character.

THE LIFE BEAUTIFUL

THERE is a little baby in my house, just a tiny baby. She will be four months old tomorrow. Yesterday afternoon she stretched out her little dimpled hands and cried for something that she saw. Of course that was not the first time she cried for something she wanted, for a baby's first cry is for her food. For the first time, however, something new caught her eye, and she wanted it. There was a vase filled with lovely white and red carnations on the mantelpiece. The vivid colour attracted her. She saw through her infant eyes that they were beautiful, and she put out her little hand for them. This action pleased me very much. Her mother was delighted too. As she held the infant in her arms and allowed the baby to clutch her baby hand around the stem of a pretty red carnation the mother said: "Isn't it lovely that the first thing little girlie cried for was beautiful?"

I wonder why everybody loves and wants the beautiful? We try to fill our houses with beautiful things; nice shades of colour on our carpets, furniture of well-rounded lines, pictures of graceful figures, of sunlit seas, and sweet meadows. It is because there is within us that which is good. A God-given power to select the sweet, the lovely and the pure. We do not really desire only the

beautiful in material things. Deep down within us there is a reverent longing for the beautiful in words, and that is why we love picturesque prose and flowing poetry. That is why we love the chivalrous in action, and the melodious in sound. This is the touch of God within us. There is an artistry in living, to be recognised, as surely as there is the artistic in the world to rest and please the eye. God has given us the flowers of the garden to make our life delightful, while we are the flowers in which God Himself delights.

God so loves us that He gave His Son for us that we might grow in beauty, and one day be gathered from the garden of this life to be placed as beautiful and everlasting flowers in His Eternal Home.

SOUVENIRS OF THE WAR

IN my house there are a number of souvenirs from the war. In these my children take great delight. They never tire of showing them to their little friends. I wonder why children love souvenirs? Do you know? I asked them why they took such pride in the odds and ends that were picked up at and near the scenes of the great world war. One replied that he liked the trophies because they were hard to get and not every one could have them. Another said he delighted in them because they came from a far-off part of the world where many brave men had laid down their lives. And my eldest boy valued them, he said, because of their historical connection.

Yet, while all these are true there is a far greater value attached to them, and it is this: because memories cling around these souvenirs. When you look at them, a whole crowd of pictures rises up in your mind and you can live again the scenes from which they came.

In my hand I now hold a piece of the clock of the railway station at Arras, France. It is part of the opaque glass dial with the Roman characters of the figure seven on it. This clock was smashed and the piece I possess was broken off while I was in the station. How it happened was this. A bridge just beyond the station, leading

into the city, was being bombarded by the Germans. They aimed to destroy it because the Allies were sending soldiers and ammunition across it.

The shots from the enemy guns were not well aimed, and one of the shells struck the roof of the station. Part of the flying shrapnel broke the clock. While the firing lasted there were considerable noise and confusion, as you may well imagine. After the clatter ceased, I went out onto the station platform, and that is where I picked up my souvenir. Oh, let me hasten to add that the Germans never hit the bridge.

There are other souvenirs: shells, belts, helmets, a bayonet, part of a Zeppelin that had been destroyed, and other things. I wish you could see them all. Sometimes I tell the stories of these strange souvenirs to the little visitors who come in. They are always interested. These remembrances will always be cherished. All souvenirs are highly prized by their possessors.

I wonder if you have any souvenirs of your very own. I believe you have. Is it a little Bible you received from your Sunday school teacher? Or a picture postal from a distant friend? It may be a little silver cup your auntie gave you when you were a baby. Or perhaps a Christmas present from your uncle who is no more. These and such like are all souvenirs, and you can never look at them without recalling the circumstances under which they came into your possession. My dear children, it is good to remember these things. But souvenirs are not always things you can place in your drawer or keep on the table.

Sometimes they are invisible, but they are very real. One is your mother's love for you. That is a souvenir which we keep in our hearts. You can never sit quietly down and look in there without seeing her. It is then the memory paints the picture of all her past tenderness, all that sacrifice, through the years of infant helplessness. To keep this as a sacred souvenir always with you is one of the things that will minister to your peace and joy throughout all the long years of your manhood and womanhood. Keep that souvenir of love safely ensconced in your heart. You will find it a souvenir of priceless treasure which will stimulate grateful delight as long as you live.

Prize these souvenirs of love for they are the greatest gifts of God.

WINDING UP THE CLOCK

ONE evening when I was winding up the clock my little boy said to me:

"Why do you do that, Daddy?"

I replied: "Because it is getting run down. It would not go if I did not wind it up. The spring has become relaxed because it has unwound itself in keeping the works going. In its daily work as it has ticked off the seconds and struck off the hours it has gradually been spending its strength. If I had not wound it up you would have found it stopped in the morning. Then you would not know whether you were late or early for school. There would have been confusion all over the house, and busy people like we are cannot afford to let that happen. You see how important it is to wind up the clock?" I asked.

"Would it be absolutely useless then?" asked my boy.

"Useless, good for nothing else," I pointed out, "for it could not do its duty. Without being wound it would be only a piece of lumber and in the way."

Sometimes I think I hear the old clock saying in a tired mood: "Ah, please don't wind me up. Let me have a week's rest. I've ticked off time for years."

I find myself replying:

"You rest all summer when the house is locked up and quiet, when the children have no school to go to and we are all away in the country. We do not need your services then."

How very much like clocks you children are. Indeed you resemble clocks a great deal. Your duty is to keep on going, to keep on being good and happy. To keep ticking off smiles of happiness from morning till night indicates that you are well wound. Your main spring and your works must be kept in condition that you may be wreathed in smiles, for when you are not that way the house is all upset. Without your happy faces and happy condition, your parents know that your springs have run down. To keep from being run down and becoming tired and fretful you must get wound up. Yes, you must actually get wound up every night just the same as the clock.

"But how am I to get wound up that I may keep on smiling?" you ask. You must go gladly to bed. When mother or nurse says, "Bedtime, children," you should always remember that is the place where the winding is done. Sleep is the means by which the springs of life are wound up. All through the day your springs of energy are relaxing. All your studies, work and play use up energy, unwinding the springs. Sleep will wind them up again. Go to sleep early then, every night, and in the morning your face will shine radiantly with hope and gladness. You will keep the good time going. Everybody in the house will be kept right. Mother and father will look at you and rejoice. Father will feel you are in good

shape for that romp that keeps his heart from growing old. No one can romp about and play if his spirits are low from lack of winding. Your studies are made easier and full of pleasure when your life springs are well wound. Your work is a pleasant pastime which the full-wound energy is glad to grasp at. Play is the overbubbling spirit to be enjoyed by all boys, girls and grown folks, too, who are careful to wind up their life springs well every night.

Remember the winding of the clock and surrender gladly to the slumbers that keep your wheels going round. It is this that keeps the home pleasant, punctual and placid.

But you can't wind up the clock without a key. Yes, don't forget the key, the key of prayer, so that God will make you a true clock, a reliable clock, and a well-wound clock.

AUTOGRAPHS

ONE of the trials of all public men is the autograph hunter with his album. Wherever such a man goes there is always somebody who lays siege to his fountain-pen, and says:

“Please, please put your name in my album.”

In speaking of this a famous friend of mine, who has travelled all over America and Europe, asked me:

“I wonder why people ask you to do that?”

To which I replied: “It seems senseless, and yet it really is not. People want to remember you by something they will always have, especially if you are their friend. They want to have a record of your acquaintance or your friendship. After all it is an honour to be so asked and it is a privilege to inscribe your name. It is a lasting record of the people one has been glad to meet in his life.”

This explanation gave a new light and meaning to the request and it has become a great pleasure ever since for him to accede to such wishes. But there are many different kinds of autograph albums and many different kinds of people keep them. The most important autograph album that I know of is one in which I am sure your name is written. “Whose is it? And how does my name

come to be there?" you ask. I wondered why too. It is this. Listen, children.

God has an autograph album and you are writing your name in it now. You ask how? By every thought you think. By every word you speak. By every hope you express. By every act you perform. You are writing your name in the "Book of Life" by doing any of these things.

Ah, what a scrawl some of us are making of our names in God's book! Such blots blur the page. Oh, those hasty, careless scribbles, what a lot of unintelligible characters!

Fortunately, you children have just begun to write. You have just begun your first letter. Execute it carefully. Follow the best examples set before you. Trace them out with clear, firm lines, for I want to warn you that you must be careful if you wish God to recognise your names on the great day when the circle of His friends is made up. God is going to give us all a new name then, and that new name will be in accordance with the way we write the name we have here now. You would surely not like to be called the "Careless," or the "Slovenly," or the "Dirty," or the "Greedy." No, I believe not. Boys and girls do not like to be called such names. Yet, if you are any one or all of these, God cannot help it, for He must always bestow the names that are true. What you write now will be looked up and read on the reckoning day, and you will be judged accordingly.

Rather let us live to make our records careful, neat and clean, that He may call us "the Good,"

“the Careful,” “the Painstaking,” “the Unselfish.” The good and careful writer will enter into the joy of his Lord.

Examine your writing carefully every day. Is it satisfactory? If not, are you trying to improve it? Keep a good example before you, the writing of God, for in the Bible are written the words that enable you to round out your life-story in clear, unmistakable characters.

SHRAPNEL HELMETS

ALL boys like to wear a soldier's hat, and the little girls like to see them in it. The Scottish boy likes the bobbing busby. Little children in London love to look up at the shining, peaked helmets of the Horse Guards at Whitehall. You American children like to think there was nothing nicer in the days of the war than to see that smart sombrero-like headgear of the American private soldier. They look so nice when a lot are together on parade.

But I wonder why, when we see the pictures of the men in battle, they wear different hats? In battle they wear helmets—shrapnel helmets—things like big, inverted soup-plates made of steel. The little girls who admire the "pretty" hats of the men on parade probably think that the soldiers with the "soup plates" on their heads do not look so well. Neither do they, but they are more serviceable, and service comes first. These steel helmets are to protect the head from pieces of shrapnel that fly about in the air after a shell bursts. Tens of thousands of valuable young lives have been saved by putting off the soft felt hat and going into the fight with the helmet.

God thinks we ought all to wear helmets, for the "Prince of the Power of the Air"—which is another name for the evil one—is always casting his

darts at the heads of the children of God. So we are advised in His Word to "put on the helmet of salvation." That means the helmet that saves. His helmet has saved a million to fight on the side of right for every one that the shrapnel helmet has saved to fight the foes of liberty and democracy.

The head, as you know, is the most important and vulnerable part of the body. In it are the eyes with which you see, the tongue by which you speak, and most important of all are those brain cells by which you think, and through which you control every movement of your body. It is because a man's head is so important to his efficiency as a fighting man that the Government provides every soldier with a steel helmet, and also it is because it is so absolutely important that you shall be able to think truly and well about God, and about people, and about life, that the Good Book tells you to "put on the helmet of salvation." For if the darts of the Evil One find entrance to your thoughts, he will have made great progress towards your defeat; he will teach you to doubt God, to hate man, and to believe that the main purpose in life is to satisfy your own desires. He will so influence the eyes of the spirit that, to you, black will seem white, and evil good. Thus, even against your very will, he will compel you to fight for him instead of against him. And in the end he will slay you. Your character needs no flimsy felt hat protection, but requires the sure defence of the salvation of our God.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

I WONDER why we like to hear records played on the gramophone? Perhaps many of you have a gramophone in your home. You like to hear it play the music, or sing the songs of famous players and singers. If it were not for the gramophone and the records you would probably never be able to hear these masters. The records of these artists enable you to hear the great gifts they have, either instrumentally or in song. Furthermore you can have them repeated as often as you wish, until you are quite familiar with them. It is good to have the records of great people with us. They enable us to know the things worth knowing.

But before the great things we hear can be placed on gramophone records they first have to exist in the heart of the people who produce them. I was very much struck by a statement I once read, that the commandments were first engraved not on the tables of stone, but on Adam's heart. This struck me as being strange, and yet I find in the Bible that out of the heart are the issues of life. You see then that nothing can come from us that is not in us. No words can be spoken which are not the impressions already on our hearts and minds.

In fact our heart is just like a gramophone rec-

ord. The machine can only say what is written on the record, and we can only speak what is written on the heart. When we are told to "keep our heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," something very important is conveyed to us all. It is this: Conscience stands as the test for everything that seeks to come and make an impression on our hearts, and if conscience does not approve it must be rejected. This demands some diligence but it is worth it.

During the war the censor did great service in keeping improper information from the minds of the people. This enabled the public to remain confident and true to themselves. If you will give the censor with which God has equipped you all the authority to reject the improper, you will remain confident too and true to yourselves. This censor is your sense of right, and this is the work it is meant to perform.

Tennyson says wisely and well:

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou can'st not then be false to any man."

When the records are made for gramophones they are true reproductions of what is said into them. You cannot say one thing and have the record repeat something different. So the men that make these have to be very careful, very cautious indeed, about what is played, sung or spoken, in order to have good records. Only one voice must speak. If there are many voices, all saying different things, a jumbled, unintelligible noise is the result. You cannot make out what is

intended to be said. This is also true with us. A clear condition of the heart is only possible where one voice has made its imprint upon it. Therefore be cautious and let the conscience censor your record. The highest results are obtained from the unmistakable Voice of God on the heart of man.

CARRIER PIGEONS IN WAR

CARRIER pigeons, or "homing" pigeons—as some children commonly call them—have played a surprisingly important part in the war. When we consider the ingenuity exhibited by man in inventing complex and powerful instruments of destruction, it seems strange that he should have found a use for such a frail and tiny creature as a pigeon in so gigantic and difficult a task.

The airplane is known as the eye of the army. The telephone might be called its tongue. And these wonderful inventions have performed an inestimable service in enabling the army to recognise its foe and to dispose itself for dealing with him.

To what, then, might we liken a pigeon? I think the pigeon might be likened to one of those sensitive nerves which issues in our skin, and by which we are able to sense contact with anything, whether friend or foe.

"I wonder how this can be?" you ask.

I wondered that too when first I heard of pigeons at the front. When I got a chance I asked an officer who had charge of the pigeon service, at one of the headquarters, and this is what he told me:

"Sometimes," said he, "weather conditions do not permit the airplane to fly in position to ob-

serve the enemy. Sometimes even when the airplane may fly over the line of the foe, the eyes of the observers are not keen enough to spot the movements of the troops. Moreover, although the telephone is most useful as a main nerve of communication, it is not always practicable to run a line close enough to the enemy to be of most use, because of the fact that the operator must either talk or use the buzzer. And when an enemy is close he may easily hear these sounds. Again, when heavy firing breaks out the roar of the guns makes it impossible to talk over the telephone. Sometimes bursting shells cut the wires and communication is destroyed. In such emergencies as these we have found the carrier pigeon invaluable."

I asked the officer if he could show me how the pigeons worked, so he took me to the pigeon house. Pretty soon one of these little birds came fluttering in and was promptly seized by my friend. Deftly he detached a small cube of paper from its leg, and soon he spread out before me a cryptic message, which was in such a form that I could understand nothing of it. Not so the officer. He sent the message to its destination. Then he took me into his little hut. There he showed me on the wall a great map and pointed to a little village on the firing line.

"The message which you just saw came from that village," he said.

He next opened a drawer and pulled out a smaller map, which he called an operation map. There in great detail was traced every natural

feature of the ground about that village. He pointed to a little mark on the map which seemed to be ahead of the trenches.

"That," he said, "is what is known as a listening post. It is in reality a great shell hole, into the sides of which have been dug a couple of 'funk holes,' into which listeners may crawl if the firing gets heavy. Every night two men go out to this shell hole, one of them carrying on his back a small cage containing three pigeons. Out in this advanced position they lie silently all night with every nerve atingle, listening for the approach of the enemy. In this way they pick up some very valuable information. Sometimes an enemy patrol passes near. If they are conversing the listeners try to hear and understand what they are saying. They try to estimate the number of the patrol and the destination to which they are going. Then, crouching down in the bottom of the 'funk hole,' by the light of a tiny electric torch, they write a message, tie it to a pigeon's leg, release the pigeon, and in a very few moments we have the message. Then we telephone it back to regimental headquarters.

"This would be only a trivial incident. Strange as it may seem to you the fate of great battles has sometimes depended upon the fidelity and courage of these little birds. One great engagement at least, that in the Argonne Woods, was turned from almost certain defeat into a great victory, by one of these little feathered friends of freedom. All other means of communication had broken down, and finally a message was dispatched by a

pigeon. In its flight the bird was shot and badly wounded. But it still kept on and, flying limply, reached the pigeon cot. Almost expiring it was relieved of its message. The reserves were called up to strengthen the weak spot. The day was saved and victory achieved."

Sometimes, children, it seems to me that you have a place in the great battle of life similar to that of the pigeon in the Great War. Your natures are so pure and innocent that by your very presence in our homes and lives, you warn us of the presence of subtle evils which our own consciences are too blunted, or too careless, to detect. Sometimes when we, who are older, get out of touch with each other, because we have harboured some evil or selfish, or prideful disposition in our hearts, your sweet and ingenuous natures enable us to re-establish communion with each other.

Yes, my boys and girls, no more can we do without you than the army could have done without its pigeons. By being your own truest selves, by following your own Divinely implanted instincts, you can, and often do, turn into victory that which might have been dismal failure for your elders.

The Prophet said:

"A Little Child shall lead them."

Through you we sense the nearness of the Good God Himself. May it be your care to live close to Him, and thus even in childhood fulfil your invaluable function in life.

WATCH DOGS OF WAR

DOGS have been called up for active service in the Great War and they have played almost as brave a part as their masters. Before the war we wondered at the great St. Bernard dogs that followed the travellers in the Alps. When the traveller climbs the Alps and gets lost the monks who live in a monastery high up these great mountains send out dogs to find him. The dogs carry a small barrel around their necks. These contain sufficient nourishment to sustain the exhausted lost traveller when found by the dog, until he is guided back to safety.

But more wonderful than these are the dogs of the war. I wonder how many of you children have heard of them! These sagacious, well-trained animals followed the soldiers out into that dangerous zone between the Allies and the enemy. Out there in "No Man's Land" they fearlessly and cautiously prowled about day and night looking for wounded soldiers. Many a soldier's life has been saved by these Red Cross dogs locating them as they lay out there helpless. No human being could reach the wounded there as he would be shot down immediately by the enemy. These dogs, with their keen sense of smell, helped to locate men in shell holes, or half-buried in caved-in dugouts, and led rescue parties to these unfortunate men. The dogs

engaged in this Red Cross work carried around their necks a container filled with nourishing food and first-aid remedies. Thus a man found in a helpless position where he could not be rescued immediately obtained enough to sustain life until the stretcher-bearers were able to go out and bring him back to the lines of safety. Yes, these dogs did a wonderful work for humanity.

Dangers exist for boys and girls that are just as real as those of the traveller in the Alps or the wounded soldier out there in "No Man's Land." Only because we do not see the dangers which lurk around us we are apt to think aids are unnecessary. That is where boys and girls make mistakes and get hurt and lost, for you must remember the unseen dangers are more dangerous than those we can see.

God has a way of looking after his children that is far in advance of employing dogs, as we mortals have to do. He has a wonderful way of looking after the safe return of His lost or injured friends. Also remember this that our way is generally to look after those who got lost or wounded, but God goes further; He seeks to protect us against such happenings.

In the unmatched poem which is known as the 23rd Psalm, the poet with the spiritual insight proclaims the fact that: "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the House of the Lord for ever."

These twin watch dogs, "Goodness and Mercy," are sent out by our Heavenly Father to aid us in our journey through life. They will bring us in

safety to His House in the end. The picture of Mercy and Truth following you is a true representation of God's care for His children. It would have been impossible to survive the years of helplessness if His Goodness had not been a fact when you were very, very young. We could never have survived the sins of our lives if mercy had not dogged our footsteps, imparting God's forgiveness. Never could we have found our way back from our wanderings if He had not mercifully sought us out and brought us home again. In the days of difficulty and doubt remember that following you are these twin watch dogs of God—Goodness and Mercy—giving a sense of security, and carrying with them all that is needed to guide you through the maze and perils of life.

"CHEER-O, CHEER-O"

CHEER-O" was the magic word exchanged between the soldiers as they passed each other to and from the trenches in the Great War. This word "cheer-o" was the greeting that brought smiles to the faces of gloom and discomfort more quickly than any other. Such a greeting refreshed the drooping spirits of the men after their long stay in the dug-outs and trenches, like the chirping of the birds in springtime. To the men "going in" the same magic word had the effect of giving additional courage and cheer. A word, a pleasing sound, is a very encouraging thing when heard at the time we need it most. I wonder why? Because it goes deep down into our very heart. It is the humane feeling, the kindly feeling, that touches our natures.

In one of the Bible songs, speaking of springtime, these words occur:

"The time of the singing of the birds is come."

Why do the birds sing in the spring? It is true the winter is passed, but the flowers have not yet come. The trees are still leafless; no berries are on the bushes, yet the birds sing. Why? I wonder why? Spring winds can be very fierce, and nests that stood the winter cold, snow and storms, are

often blown away and scattered. The rains of April cannot add to the comfort of our feathered friends, for there are no leaves to act as eaves for their little homes. Yet this is the time of the singing of the birds. Again I ask, why?

The birds sing because of the promise of coming summer. They sing for gladness at the prospect of being able to enjoy the warm sunshine once more. Glad of a promise! The men going in and out of action in the war zone say "cheer-o" because of the promise of kindly feeling, expressing the hope that they may see each other once more. They are cheered also because of the promise of the peace that their efforts will bring them. Promises make our hearts glad, especially when we are passing through the darkest hour. Oh, how precious is the promise of love when there will be no more strife, hatred or desire for destruction. The promise of the springtime of peace makes the soldier's breast beat with renewed hopes. It makes him feel like the birds in spring; he wants to say "cheer-o, cheer-o" to his fellow-man.

God has promised us all a summertime of happiness, when we shall be able to dance and sing in the green meadows of His love, and bask in the sunshine of His presence.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He restoreth my soul."

To reach this summertime of green pastures we have to pass through the cycle of the seasons,—autumn, winter, spring and at last we reach the blessed summertime. Let the frost come, the wintry winds blow, the spring rains stream down,

but we can rejoice because of the promise of that summertime that is coming.

If the little birds can sing so merrily in the springtime, so can we. It is not necessary to wait until we have everything we want to feel happy. We can be glad in the prospect of one day realising all the summer promises of our God.

OUR SUMMER HOLIDAYS

HURRAH, school is over! At last the holiday days are here. Oh, the happy, joyous vacation days have at length arrived. What a treat it is to have nothing to do but to have a good time from morning till night! No studies to worry us for the next day, no special duties to perform, only ourselves to please.

"I wonder why we have to work, study and do all these things we don't like, anyway," said Jack to his school chum Jim. "Why can't we just have one long holiday all the year around? Wouldn't that be fun?"

Jim was a somewhat older, and therefore wiser boy, and to Jack's surprise replied:

"Of course I like the holidays to come around as much as you and all the others do. But somehow I think I would not be so anxious to have them if I had no school to go to, no work or no studies to keep me busy all the rest of the year. It is probably because we have to work hard during the school months that we enjoy our summer holidays so much. That's my opinion, Jack."

"Well, yes, that may be so," conceded Jack; "but I think it would be much easier if it were all holidays, all the time. Don't you?"

But Jim replied wisely: "I'm thinking what a hardship it would be if there were no vacations at

all. Think what we'd miss: No going away to the country; there'd be no fishing, nor swimming, and no time to row on the lake in that fine skiff of Uncle's. My, I love rowing. I like to look away down into the cool blue water on a warm summer's day and see the little fish and minnows skimming about and coming up to the surface once in a while to catch an insect floating on the water. I like to paddle on a raft too. It's great fun."

"Somehow you're always right, Jun," said Jack frankly. "Work does certainly become easier by feeling we have a time coming when we shall have nothing to do but enjoy ourselves."

Then Jim related how he wanted to grow up a strong man, and how his Uncle had said work out in the open air was good recreation for growing boys.

"I'm going to help in the haying this year," said Jim. "That's part of the fun, riding on the hay-cart, and tumbling about the hay-cocks to press them down. Doesn't it seem curious that we can enjoy ourselves more when we know we are at the same time helping others to do their work?"

But Jack had no uncle in the country to whom he could go, and for a while he was silent. After a while he said: "What can little boys do in the country? Would I be too little and not strong enough to be useful? I never thought of work being so much like play, nor play so much like work. Now they seem so much alike to me."

That summer I met the two boys in the country. I learned that Jim asked his parents to write Uncle, and Uncle said he would be happy to have

Jack come with Jim to spend the holidays together, and of course Jack's mother and father consented. So there they were having the time of their young lives playing together in the meadows and helping in many things that little boys are so handy in doing. Those two boys are growing up into robust young men, strong of muscle and bright of intellect.

What a hardship the schooldays would be if there were no vacations! How tiresome life would become if we had with us the long dreary work of the winter, without the holidays! Day after day, month after month, and year after year would be a continuous, monotonous drudgery; nothing to look forward to for a happy change. But that is not the way God plans things for His children. Happily, God in His wisdom has arranged that the summer shall come in which we can rest and recreate ourselves amid the sunshine and flowers. Of course the very idea of holidays comes from the rest that men and women and children used to have from toil in the days set apart as Holy-days. Every Holy-day is a rest day. Rest does not mean idleness or waste of time. Devote your Holy-days, or holidays, to a good cause. Any day can be helpful to us that we care to set apart from the others in the contemplation of God.

SIR HARRY LAUDER

I WONDER why we are continually attracted by great people. When we think of great people such names spring to our minds as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Lloyd George, President Wilson, and all the rest of that great galaxy of the world's great princes of men. Everybody is interested in what they did, what they said, or what they are doing and saying. Their every movement is watched with deep interest to discover the cause of their greatness.

I wonder what actually does attract us to such personages, don't you? It is chiefly because of their simplicity, you will find. When you get close to a great man and talk to him, you are astonished how ordinary he seems. You will find him plain, simple and unaffected. A great man does not assume airs, nor does he "show off" as you children call it. No, when you see a great man you see a real man. It is the reality of him that makes a great man attractive. There is nothing artificial, nothing imitative or assumed about such a person. He is only his real self, nothing more nor less. That is what attracts us. Some people like to imitate great folks. But imitation of this sort takes away from your real worth and character. To be worth anything you must be distinctive and real in everything you say or do.

Did you ever see a gem—a real diamond,—and also a paste one? The paste diamond resembles the real one so much that you or I could hardly tell the difference. But the difference in value is there just the same. Nobody ever puts the high appreciation on a paste diamond that he does upon the glittering reality dug from the mine.

In the acting profession it is the custom for men and women to give themselves high-sounding and attractive names. But these are not the real, nor the great actors who attain fame. Among those who have made their plain, but real, names stand for something distinctive you will find Henry Irving, Sarah Bernhardt, Forbes Robertson, Harry Lauder and others. All such have had the confidence in their gifts and the sense of certainty in their own personality to do their work in their own names. And they have become great.

You may have seen Harry Lauder on the stage, for I know children like to hear the plain, simple but true messages he tells in his humorous songs, that go to the heart. He is noted for his simplicity, his perfectly natural and real manner. He is the same off the stage as he is on it,—simple, smiling and sincere. It is this that has won him fame and fortune throughout the world.

He started out in life without any advantages. He was handicapped by a brief education, having had to go to work while very young. But possessing vocal qualities he went on the stage as a singer. Some of his people did not approve of his becoming an actor, for it is a profession that requires strong character to keep above the evils

surrounding it. But from the beginning Harry Lauder believed in himself, and he has made good and has also done good. When we make good we can do good to a far greater extent than if we failed in our own career.

Now risen to a high estate, possessor of a noble Highland castle, Harry Lauder is the friend of presidents, kings and princes. He is received all over the world with lavish evidences of good-will and admiration. Yet with all he remains simple, sincere and smiling.

The Dear Old Harry, plain Harry Lauder, who sings those simple songs that touch our very nature, acts as a message to every one of you boys and girls, calling you to be true to yourselves. Leave imitation only to such as have not the courage to be themselves. You, too, have the wish to succeed in life, whichever profession or path you choose for your future. Will you try to remember to be your real, true self, your own little self as God made you? Be a real jewel, not an imitation, not a paste diamond, that you may sparkle brilliantly and win the true admiration of all who know your genuine character.

THINK AND THANK

ELSIE went out walking with her father in the evening when the stars were shining brightly.

"Oh, how wonderful the stars are," she said. "They shine and make the sky look as if lit up with tiny, flickering candles."

"How many stars do you think there are?" asked her father.

Elsie replied: "There are not so many. I can see them all."

"Well, then, will you count them?" her father asked.

"Yes," little Elsie answered. So she turned her head heavenward and started walking along, counting as she went. She succeeded in counting up to fifty. Then she said to her father: "Daddy, my neck is getting painful and my head is feeling queer. I can't count more than fifty."

Her father replied: "Well, try again, for there are many, many more stars than that, I am sure."

So Elsie lifted her little head skyward again and this time counted up to sixty-six. But she could continue no longer, and she was so dizzy from looking up and her neck pained her so that she stopped. Turning to her father again, she said: "Daddy, I cannot count any more. But do you know I had no idea there were so very many. There are heaps more than sixty-six and there

always seem to be some new ones twinkling out between those I did count. There don't seem to be enough numbers to go round."

Then this little girl, Elsie, began to think about the vastness of the starry firmament. She was overwhelmed with the sense of the greatness and wonderfulness of God which came to her through her thinking of the stars.

Then her father told Elsie of many more wonderful things that were just as immense as the stars. Most of the things around us, he told her, appear quite ordinary, commonplace and uninteresting until we begin to think about them. "In fact," he continued, "one of the really wonderful things in life is to think. All the education given you at school is for the purpose of enabling you to think in order that you may see some of the great things in the world that you cannot understand by merely looking at them. Boys wonder why they are taught such difficult subjects as natural history, or botany, or geography, and girls cannot see that they need bother their brains with lessons on how the world revolves on its axis, how the moon causes the tides, or what it is that makes things grow. But it is all done with the idea of teaching you to think."

*Mr
Horne*

As Elsie listened to her father the harvest moon shone forth from behind a cloud and cast a sheen on the tall corn, wheat, oats and other things which were growing in abundance in the fields on either side of the country road along which they were walking.

"Father," said Elsie suddenly, "I was just

thinking how barren and useless these fields looked when they were covered with snow last winter. How wonderful it is that they should now be so full of the things we eat! They are all so ripe and ready for harvesting, too."

"Now you see," replied her father, "how thinking makes you thankful. If you will think about the mercies of God to you, you cannot help being thankful. Only those that are unmindful of the things above and around us are unthankful, for without thinking you cannot give thanks. Keep the words, think and thank, constantly related in your mind.

"I know a little boy," said Elsie's father as they started homewards, "who printed the words, 'Think and Thank,' out on a card. He hung this up in his bedroom where he could see it always. He never had any difficulty what to pray about. In his prayers he was not always asking for things but gave thanks for things he had already received. He made his wants known for such things as he needed with thanksgiving, as the Bible tells us to do: 'Make your wants known with thanksgiving.' "

Thanksgiving day is a time to remember and give thanks for all the blessings God bestows on you. This is Thanksgiving day, a day to give thanks for the fields full of oats to make your porridge for breakfast, the wheat to supply flour to make bread with. I think most children like toast and oatmeal for breakfast. Then there are the corn and other vegetables that we have at other meals. To think about all these things is to be

thankful. There are so many things to be thankful for, more than the stars, which are so numerous that you grow tired in the counting of them. Remember the glorious freedom that prevails, the many things God gives you to enjoy; think of them and give thanks with all your hearts. Remember all that has been fought for and won for you, and turn your heart in joyful thanksgiving to God who gave courage and strength to those who have suffered in order that you may have all these blessings. Think and thank.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

OF all the days in the year I wonder why boys and girls like Christmas the best of all? Is it because of the many fine presents you receive, the good things you get to eat, the apples, nuts, oranges, candies, plum pudding, turkey, and all the rest of the goody-goodies that are usually so abundant on that day? And the Christmas tree, too, laden with pop-corn chains, candy walking-sticks, candy ornaments, animal biscuits and those glittering gold and silver tinsel garlands, coloured glass balls,—how happy the pretty sight makes your young hearts! Santa Claus is certainly good to some, for I have seen all these things that were reputed to have been brought down the nursery chimney. It is certainly wonderful how he does it. I have also seen pretty coloured lights artistically arranged, which when lit in the twilight or evening make the tree exceedingly enchanting. When the tree is lit and looking its very best it makes us feel like singing, and then children and parents unite in singing Christmas carols as they sit around the tree. This is a happy condition I have seen in many homes.

But while there are many children enjoying these lavish festivities, a far larger number have no Christmas tree, no presents, no nuts, nor candies, nor fruit, nor plum pudding, nor turkey on

Christmas day. No, it is not because they have not been good, for I know most of such children to be even much better than the ones who have all the good things in life and do not know what want is. Yes, and besides goodness I have found great gifts of happiness among them. It is often in the humbler places we find the truly great hearts that enlighten and gladden the world.

"Who is He in yonder stall
At Whose feet the shepherds fall?"

Always remember that the Greatest Man that ever dwelt on earth was born in a barn.

It is the greatness in you, not the great things around you, that counts in life. In fact, it is the great things around us that spoil us by distracting our attention from the good things we would be otherwise bending our efforts to.

But, children, whether you are rich or poor, don't you think it happens very well that Christmas should fall in the middle of the winter? Why? Because it is the most dead, the dreariest, the most uncomfortable time of the year, when poor people suffer very much from poverty and cold. It is then that you can show the Christmas spirit you are supposed to possess. It is the spirit of giving, not receiving. There is always some one less fortunate whose cold house you can make warm, whose hearts you can cheer by little duties, or a lonely child whom you can try to please by sharing your playtime, by letting him take part in your Christmas frolics.

Christmas is a time for merry-making, that is,

to make others merry. Christmas is a time for presents, that is, giving presents.

Christmas is a time in a bad season for good things, that is, doing good things. It is a time to rejoice, to rejoice in the joy we can bring to others.

“We’ll bring the little duties
We have to do each day;
We’ll try our best to please Him,
At home, at school, at play:
And better are these treasures
To offer to our King
Than richest gifts without them,
Yet these a child may bring.”

NEW YEAR CHANCES

I WONDER why we delight in all things new? Not only boys and girls, but grown folks, too, always want something new, and it has made me wonder why it is that our old things don't keep us happy enough not to require the new. Something in us all makes us more careful about, and take more pride in, a new thing than in an old one.

Old toys are discarded for new ones, especially on Christmas day. New clothes are tended with care while old ones are flung into the cupboard. Many of our old friends are treated with contempt when we form affections for new ones.

All these things I have noticed and wondered at, so I asked one of the little boys on our street. I said to him: "I see you have a new sleigh. Last week you had a perfectly good one; why did you want a new one?"

"Yes, it was all right," admitted this little boy named Harry; "but I knew that Bob next door was getting a new one, and so was Jack who lives at the corner there, and so, of course, I wasn't going to be the only one with an old sleigh."

As he spoke the little chap brushed the snow off the seat in a way that showed he wanted to keep the red paint looking as bright and new as possible. He liked the old sleigh but he loved the new one. The old one was no doubt consigned to the

wood-shed. Its bright days were gone but its usefulness remained.

Then I told Harry of a little chap named Smith who had no sleigh at all, and asked him would he give him the old one.

"Yes, he can have it," agreed Harry, so I gave him the address of the Smith boy, and the next day I went to see Johnny Smith.

"Hello, Johnny," I said. "You seem to be having a good time with your sleigh."

"Yes, I am," he replied. "You see I just got it and I never had a sleigh before. It's great fun having something new."

The sleigh gave Johnny a chance to enjoy something new, and that New Year's day was a happy one for him.

So on New Year's day I found many other new things enjoyed by different boys and girls. Some had new toys, some new books, some had new friends, and some found new opportunities.

Thus New Year's day is a day opening up to us new chances. Every year another chance is given us to improve over the last one. Every one who has failed in a school examination, or who has failed in his loyalty in his friendships, or who has failed in his or her word in obeying father or mother, is given another chance to make good. Another page of time lies open before us, clean and unsullied. We know that in the page just turned over there are many things we hope will not be repeated and which we hope will be forgiven. But with the New Year comes another chance, a new opportunity. What will you make of it? I

wonder what! Will it be a page that will shine with good deeds done, or chances cast aside which we shall regret as long as we live?

Jesus said: "Behold, I make all things new." This includes opportunities. Opportunity is a chance to do something. The coming of a New Year is the throwing open of the gates of a new chance to do something in your life. It is a fresh start that is offered to you. When Jesus said, "I shall make all things new," He meant He can give you a new heart fashioned by the fingers of the Master. He can make you equal to the fulfilling of His desires in the new opportunity that lies before you now. May it be a Happy New Year for you from beginning to end.

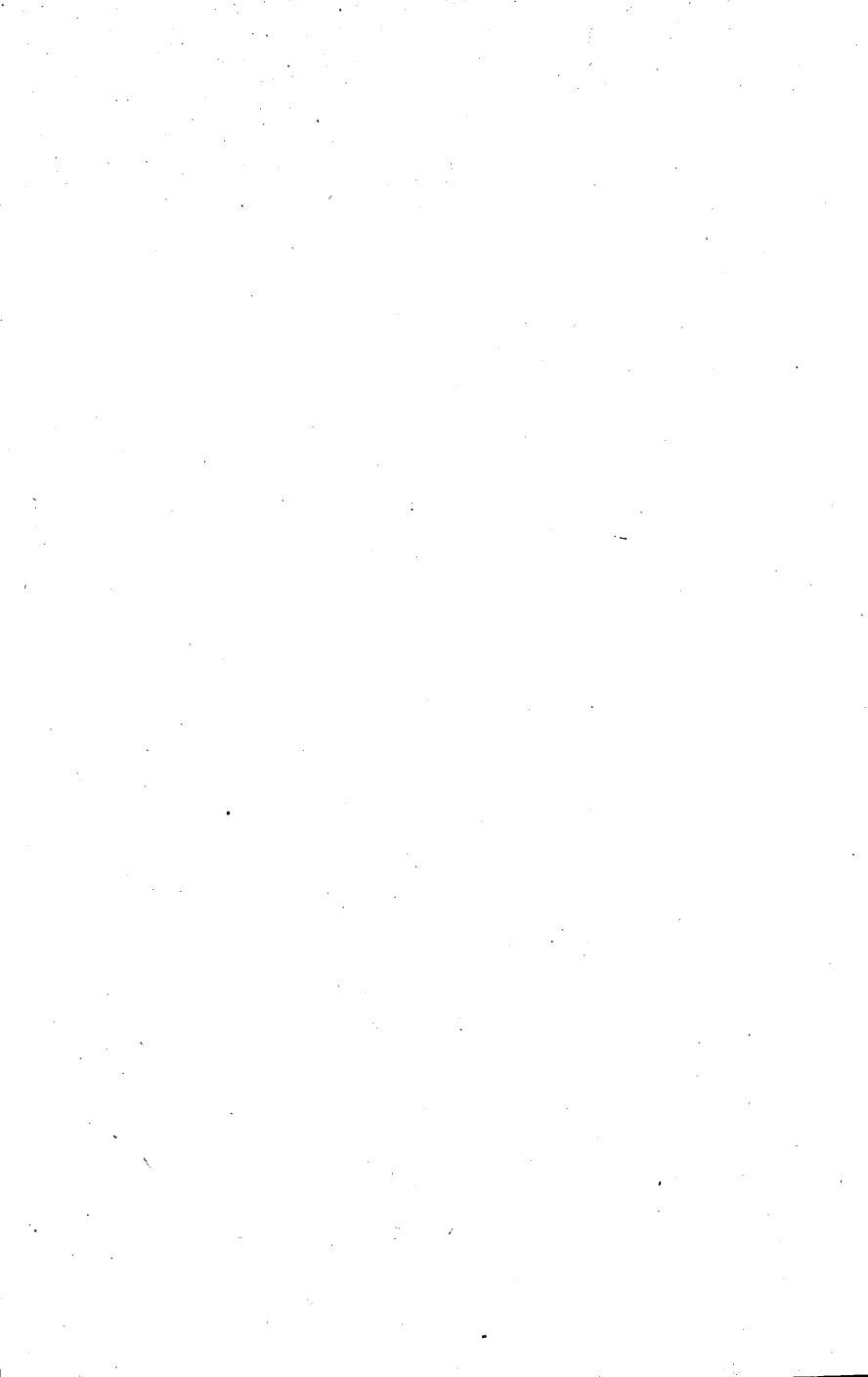
“GOOD-BYE”

HAVE you wondered what the words, “Good-Bye,” mean?

We often say “Good-Bye” and often “Good-Bye” has been said to us. What does it mean? Did you ever think of its right meaning? There are many words we use which we do not really understand, and these are two of them. They are two of the most significant and most impressive words in our language. When a dear one bids you “Good-Bye” when leaving on a long journey, the words touch our very heart as no others can. At every parting we bid each other “Good-Bye.” Mother says “Good-Bye” to you when you leave for school, and “Good-Bye” is the only term we can use in any parting.

I wonder why it is so impressive, and why we use it so much, don’t you? I will tell you, for every boy and girl should know. It is a prayer. It is the expression of our high and devout wish for our loved ones. “Good-Bye” is a contraction, a short expression for saying, “God be with you.”

So this is how, when we are leaving our friends, we commit them to the care of our good Father, God. In saying “Good-Bye” to you at the end of these little talks we have had together, I mean by that “God Be with You.”



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